

**UNDERSTANDING THE TREND OF SOCIAL CAPITAL
BUILDING IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION
IN PAKISTAN**



Submitted By

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

S. No	CONTENTS	PAGE NO
1	CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	
	1.1 Introduction	1
	1.2 Rationale of the Study	3
	1.3 Significance of the Study	4
	1.4 Synopsis of the Study	5
2	CHAPTER 2 THEORIZING SOCIAL CAPITAL IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION	
	2.1 Introduction	8
	2.2 Social Capital and its Origin	8
	2.2.1 Pierre Bourdieu	9
	2.2.2 James Coleman	11
	2.2.3 Robert Putnam	14
	2.3 Perspectives of Social Capital	15
	2.3.1 The Communitarian View	16
	2.3.2 The Network View	17
	2.3.3 The Institutional View	18
	2.3.4 The Synergy View	20
	2.4 Framing Social Capital Building in the Development of Education	22
	2.4.1 Community-School Link	22
	2.4.2 PTCs: its Origin, Structure and Objectives	23

S. NO	CONTENTS	PAGE NO
	2.4.3 Synergy View and Epstein's Six Types of Parental Involvement	26
	2.5 Theoretical Framework of the Study	27
	2.6 Conclusion	31
3	CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY	
	3.1 Introduction	33
	3.2 Qualitative Research Methodology	33
	3.3 Research Philosophy	34
	3.4 Ethnographic Approach	35
	3.5 Multiple Case Study Design	36
	3.6 Research Site	37
	3.7 Procedure for Selecting Respondents	41
	3.8 Accessing my Respondents	44
	3.9 Multiple Sources	47
	3.10 Participant Observation	47
	3.11 Group and Individual Interviews	49
	3.12 Ethical Considerations	52
	3.13 Analysis	54
	3.14 Conclusion	56
4	CHAPTER 4 CASE STUDY 1 DISTRICT SHANGLA	57

S. No	CONTENTS	PAGE NO
5	CHAPTER 5 CASE STUDY 2 DISTRICT KARAK	94
6	CHAPTER 6 CASE STUDY 2 DISTRICT ABBOTTABAD	125
7	CHAPTER 7 ANALYSIS	
	7.1 Introduction	151
	7.2 Functioning of PTCs	152
	7.3 Synergy View of Social Capital and PTCs	157
	7.4 Synergy of Community and School and Epstein's Model of Parental Involvement	163
	7.5 Conclusion	168
8	CHAPTER 8 CONCLUSIONS	
	8.1 Introduction	170
	8.2 Conclusions	170
	8.3 Recommendations	174
	8.4 Theoretical Implications of the Study	175
	8.5 Limitations of the Study	178
	REFERENCES	179
	APPENDICES	

Declaration

I declare that this dissertation is wholly my own work and has not been submitted for a degree at any other University

Abstract

This project aims to analyze the implications of social capital building at community levels through policy implementations for the development of education in Pakistan. The policy is envisaged to furnish its aims and objectives through establishing links between schools and communities in the form of Parent-Teacher-Councils. The councils are formal bodies embodying the essence of private and public partnership focusing upon providing better standard of education for all children. In order to paint a refined picture of the issue, multiple case study design is adopted to analyze data from three different districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The cases are different with regards to socio-economic conditions, literacy rate, employment opportunities, sources of communications, nature and distribution of population and gender wise structure of the communities. The study extended to the three districts helps us understand the phenomenon in wider context.

The data collected is composed of individual/group interviews along with personal observations in the field. Parents, teachers, PTC members, principals and students are selected for interviews from four different schools/communities in each district. PTC meetings are also observed coupled with studying the record of the councils.

The study is taken as repercussion of synergy view of social capital, treated as a resource in obtaining Epstein's six types of parental involvement. Each chapter is designed to revolve around this central proposition theoretically and caters for possible explanation in the prevailing situations.

The study exhibits that introduction of PTC as a tool of social capital building largely failed to play a vital role in attracting community for improving the quality of education. Among many reasons, lack of government's interest, poor socio-economic conditions and bureaucratic structures of school, are few of the important factors curtailing the outputs of the councils. However, the councils delivered encouragingly in some areas characterized by high literacy, sound economic conditions, gender based relationships and democratic attitude. Hence, it is concluded that PTC is a source of social capital building and can be more effective in achieving the targets of Epstein's model in developing countries if hindrance in its way, as revealed above, are properly addressed.

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Dedicated
to
my Parents and Family.

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1. Introduction

This study is an attempt to investigate the effectiveness of government's efforts of social capital building in the development of education in Pakistan. The concept of social capital appeared very recently as a tool to improve the quality of education in the country. Previously, the development policies in general and education policies in particular, had been bureaucratic in nature, utilizing top down approach. It was acknowledged in past few decades that concentration of power could not succeed as a panacea to the ever emerging needs of communities, and the policy makers reversed the direction of development strategies and turned to empowering communities at grass root level. However, efficacy of the nascent approach in the existing parameters is given less attention and therefore, inviting the researchers to tighten their belts for conducting contextual studies in the field.

Hence, the current study is devised as response to the anticipated research area; to understand the effectiveness and role of social capital building process. The trend of establishing school-community links furnishes to channelize mutual social capital reciprocally for the improvement of education. Government of Pakistan introduced the idea of Parents-Teachers-Councils (PTCs) at schools level to address the evolving issues of the institutions at local level. It was envisaged through the policy to make the community/parents partners in sharing the responsibility of children's education. The aims and objectives of the councils vividly portray the importance of local representatives in decision making process at school level. The intended institutional based social capital targeted to inculcate the sense of community ownership, empowerment, and more significantly, streamlining the social

relationships towards more responsive, development-oriented and democratic system. The documents of educational policy adores the concept of PTC and reflects the vitality of the idea, however, its projected results have not been practically realized as such on the ground. It can be substantiated by the literacy level in Pakistan which is still 74% in urban areas and 48% in the rural areas (DCR, 1998). The dismal state entails many dynamics of the local culture and established norms of the community like literacy rate, socio-economic conditions, nature of social networks and commitment of street level bureaucrats. The diversity of such factors had an impact upon the nature of the study to be devised.

Keeping in view the tentative nature of the issue, qualitative research method was opted to accomplish factual picture of the public-private synergy, where it was decided to get data, using ethnographic approach, through direct interaction with the respondents. Multiple case design helped in comparing communities of three different districts to highlight differences in functioning of PTCs. Triangulation of tools i.e. Participant observations, Individual and group interviews, was comprehended to ensure validity and cross checking of data. Efforts were also made to highlight the reliability of the study by depicting each school/community more minutely.

It was conducted in three districts of *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa* i.e. District¹ *Shangla*, District *Karak* and District *Abbottabad* (see chapter 4, 5 and 6 for detail about these three districts). The study reflected improved status of PTCs conspicuously in the latter district (*Abbottabad*) due to educated multilingual communities, boosting further the performance of schools. The parents/community members of the area

¹ District refers to an administrative unit that contains all the requirements of local government.

were more involved in schools' activities, reciprocating mutual support for the benefits of schools and communities. On the contrary, the former two districts (*Shangla and Karak*) were mostly featured by little trust between schools and communities because of discouraging institutional performance. Most of the parents, who had working class background, could not visualize the need of parental involvement in the promotion of education.

1.2. Rationale of the Study

Being part of education department for a decade, I always pondered over the declining standard of education and more abysmally none of the stake holders took it as a serious threat to human capital of new generation. Literally it took a lot of time in transforming 'We' from 'I', but my status was irrelevant enough to participate in decision making. The bureaucratic organization of education department had no interest in interfering in schools for betterment and took the policy of *laissez-faire* because of no check and balance system. The only executable plan was to educate parents/community for taking serious action for the safe and better schooling of their children.

This was the sole reason that I decided to work upon the newly emerged concept of social capital building in the shape of PTC's in education department as my Ph.D. thesis. This policy was executed to make the stakeholders as partners in the process of developing human skills of new generation. The essence of the phenomenon was to inculcate 'trust' between community and schools that will automatically lead to supplementing resources in 'reciprocal' way. It looked very practical on papers to involve community in decision making process at school level but in field the story of success was a far cry especially in poor and illiterate communities. Furthermore,

different studies have been conducted addressing the importance of Parent-Teacher-Association in the improvement of children's education: however, sociological in-depth studies pertaining to developing countries like Pakistan are not undertaken so far. Hence, this study would be of its kind to highlight the issues regarding the functioning of PTCs and its impact upon the quality of education.

1.3. Significance of the Study

Modernization invoked specialization in every field of human experience with explicit aim of providing better environment for humanity. However, the camaraderie that had worked as glue for social fabric also started diminishing. Industrial revolution even substituted the wish to 'have a baby' with 'a baby Austin'². Realizing the desertion of informal structures, states counteracted it with introducing formal organizations for retaliation. At this time, among many other concerns, a few people identified the unsustainability of education. In 1817, they announced the formation of Parent-Teacher-Associations (PTA's) in order to rejuvenate the importance of children's education. The same perception of a 'missing link' in modern times was realized by many social scientists (Coleman, 1998; Bourdieu, 1997 and Fukuyama, 1999), and the most prominent among them was Putnam (1995), who urged policy-makers to the above mentioned phenomenon under the umbrella of social capital.

Government of Pakistan introduced PTC in every school through reforms in educational policy since 1992 with explicit aim of involving community in the process of development. The concept of such organizations is evident in literature

² Austin Motor Company produced the most popular small car from 1922 to 1939 in England and it was nicknamed as 'Baby Austin'.

since 1819 and different studies have endorsed their effectiveness in improving educational standard in developed nations. However, it is a recent innovation introduced in quite changed environment in Pakistan and no such study is available so far to exactly analyze this issue towards attaining an effective social capital model in education. Therefore, this study will help policy-makers to visualize the public regarding³ organizations as valuable asset in the form of social capital. The same efforts will also highlight the pros and cons of the policy in different types of communities across the province. Further, it will extend an advantage to recognize/evaluate such organizations as possible form of a capital that can initiate local elements for sustainable development.

1.4. Synopsis of the Study

In the first chapter, a brief introduction of the thesis has been presented while chapter two offers detail of related literature focusing upon theoretical model as well. It starts with the concept of social capital, its role in the process of development and its corollary in development policies. It begins with the definition of development and efforts are made to allocate social capital in the process of development. Thereafter, it discusses the contributions of different scholars towards refining the idea of social capital. In order to link the concept with development policy, different perspectives of social capital are also explained and synergy view of social capital by Woolcock (2000), is selected as theoretical framework for understanding the school-community link. Furthermore, the major aim of PTC, projected as a tool of social capital building, is to improve educational standard. To

³ This concept has been used by Thomas H.Sander and Kathleen Lowney (2006) while explaining the types of social capital.

gauge effectiveness of the council, the chapter leads to combine synergy view of social capital and its role in achieving Epstein's six types of parental involvement.

Chapter III describes the step wise procedure adopted in conducting this study. It explains the significance of each step and its congruence to the study. It also highlights the tools being used in collecting data and portraying the framework of analysis.

The next three chapters are primarily concerned with the presentation of empirical data collected in three districts. Each of the chapters begins with introduction of sampled communities/schools extending to socio-economic conditions of the respondents. It also reflects the individual characteristics of the local culture and its role in the emerged five themes of framework for analysis. The first theme probes the perception of the stakeholders upon school-community links. It divulges the scope and needs of parental involvement. Then the study glides over to the second theme of institutional goals and objectives. Here, efforts are made to determine the actual position of schools in the light of educational policy. The third theme focusses upon the emergence of PTCs, specifically to expose the incongruities in theory and practice. Furthermore, the trend of shifting responsibility of child's education from home to school and school to home is explored in detail. The fourth theme explores the areas where PTCs are actively engaged. It sheds light on the actual role of the councils delimited by the principals and extended cooperation by parents/communities towards school. The final theme investigates the contribution of PTCs in achieving six types of parental involvement.

Chapter VII consists of analysis based upon primary data presented in chapter 4, 5 and 6, observations in the field and its cross referencing with existing literature. It

contains three parts. The first part digs out the rationale behind the restricted operationalization of school –community link. The second part analyzes the impact of institutional performance on the public-private synergy. In the third part, the coordination between PTC and Epstein’s modal for parental involvement is presented. As a whole, this chapter discusses the implications of PTCs in three different socio-economic strata in order to derive meaningful inferences for the development of education.

The last chapter draws out main inferences from the analysis chapter. It highlights the theoretical implications of the study and suggests recommendations for effective implementation of the policy. At the end, it pinpoints areas for further researches on the topic in future.

Chapter 2

Theorizing Social Capital in the Development of Education

2.1. Introduction

The previous chapter introduced the topic and the rationale behind selecting the issue in focus while this chapter explains the relevant literature and tracks down the topic in wider context. Furthermore, this chapter also highlights the process of social capital building in development of education through Parents-Teachers Councils. To make the reader(s) understand with regard to such concepts, this chapter is divided into three parts. Part I explores the concept of social capital in general and synergy of private and public in particular. The second part focusses upon PTC as a tool of social capital building. The third part presents the theoretical model which is combination of synergy view by Woolcock and Epstein's six types of parental involvement.

Part 1

2.2. Social Capital and its Origin

The concept of social capital advocates the importance of relationships to facilitate achieving better standard for humans. People are interlinked with one another and they sustain this connection over the time in order to get reciprocal support in achieving things that they either could not achieve by themselves, or could only accomplish with great trouble. Connected to a network or a series of networks, the members tend to share common values with other members; to the level that these networks institute a resource, they can be seen as forming a kind of capital. Apart from being useful in its immediate context, this stock of capital can often be utilized in other settings as well. Hence, then it generally follows that if one knows more

people and shares a common outlook with them, the richer he/she is in social capital. The concept of social capital demonstrated its vitality and got eminence in many disciplines of social sciences. It has also started to attract policy makers especially the World Bank constituted a team of social thinkers to chalk out a productive induction of the concept in development process.

Social capital has emerged as a multi-disciplinary concept and has recently developed considerable attention among sociologists, economists and political scientists. It is generally believed by researchers that three prominent figures, Bourdieu, Coleman and Putnam have made enormous contributions irrespective of their disciplinary focus. Each of the scholars has been described as presenting a relatively distinct tributary in the literature on social capital (Foley & Edwards, 1999: 142). Bourdieu and Coleman highlight the importance of individual and organizational social links in envisaging individual development and collective action. In contrast, Putnam holds that association and civic activities contribute primarily in social integration and well-being (Edwards, 2001). However, the three scholars argue that social capital inheres in social networks based on some normative structure.

2.2.1. Pierre Bourdieu

Bourdieu developed his concept of social capital as an adjunct to the other two forms of capital (economic and cultural) which influence deeply the structure and dynamics of societies. His main concern was to understand social hierarchy and the field was greatly influenced by Marxist sociology. He held that economic capital is at the root of all other types of capital (Bourdieu 1986: 252), and he was interested to study the holistic impact of all three types of capital in creating and reproducing

inequality. For him, inequality was to be elucidated by the production and reproduction of capital, whereas capital being accumulated labor was accrued through a course of time. But it was not suffice to see capital solely in economic terms; rather cultural capital and social capital should be treated as resources, demonstrating the product of accumulated labor.

Bourdieu argued that social realities could not be solely understood by the one form of capital recognized by economic theory without acknowledging the role of 'capital in all its forms (Bourdieu, 1986: 422). He had primarily adopted the concept of cultural capital to analyze the unequal academic achievement of children within/among social classes. Some social groups were in better position to ensure optimized yield from education for their children through pursuing appropriate cultural investment strategies within the family. Bourdieu carried with the same general approach when he talked about social capital. For him, the unequal return on a more or less equivalent cultural and economic capital for individual is mediated by the support of his/her social relations, and hence the networks function as social assets which he called a social capital (Bourdieu 1980: 2).

Consequently, then, social capital functions to reproduce inequality; although it is inseparable from other two types of capital, yet it operate independently. Cultural and social capital are not convertible to economic capital, yet they disguise more or less, the economic aspect. However, Bourdieu was more interested in analyzing the impact of all capitals on the existence of differentiation among individuals within/among social classes (Bourdieu 1986:114).

He defined social capital as:

“Social capital is the sum of resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less

institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 119).

Bourdieu acknowledged the vital importance of both, the density and durability of networks. He maintained further that the value of an individual’s ties depends largely upon the number of connections he/she can mobilize and the volume of capital attached to the connections.

A large number of criticism is leveled against the theory of social capital presented by Bourdieu on grounds of its Marxian flavor; and that he had attached social capital with the reproduction of elite’s class, and that poor were considered incapable to benefit from their social ties. Nonetheless, he is the leading figure in the realm of social capital theory because he presented the general logic of social capital and its accumulation coupled with its interplay with other forms of capital and their accumulation.

2.2.2. James Coleman

Coleman had considerable influence in the field of education and his interest in social capital too, like Bourdieu, emerged from the study analyzing relationship between social capital and academic achievements in schools. In the beginning, he found that peer group influences were more likely to shape children’s views than their parents and teachers (Coleman 1961). Drawing on a comprehensive account of outputs, Coleman’s study confirmed that family and community were far more important than the nature of school itself (Coleman *et al.* 1966). Subsequently, he conducted a series of comparative studies focusing upon the achievements of students in private and public schools. He noted that catholic/religious schools delivered more positively in children’s schooling regardless of social class and ethnicity (Coleman *et al.* 1982). The schools exhibited lower absenteeism and drop-

out rates as compared to state schools with comparable backgrounds and ability, even in communities having most disadvantaged socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds (Hoffer *et al.* 1985; Coleman and Hoffer, 1987). Coleman argued that the most substantial aspect in analyzing this position was the influence of community norms on parents and their children, which helped to endorse teachers' expectations, and hence, he regarded communities as a source of social capital that could compensate some of the effect of social and economic disadvantage within the family (Coleman and Hoffer 1987).

Coleman defined social capital as a valuable asset accessible to an actor through his or her social relationships. Constructed on his empirical studies of youth and schooling in United States, he defined the concept of social capital as, "variety of entities that all consist of some aspect of social structures, and they facilitate certain actions of actors – whether persons or corporate actors – within the structure" (Coleman 1988: 98). Keeping in mind the traditional economic distinction between public and private goods, Coleman showed how social capital aids comprehend the problem of collective action. Human and physical capital are a private good whose ownership and returns reside with individuals; in contrast, Coleman described social capital characteristically as a public good that is created by and not only available for those whose efforts are required to realize it, but to all members of a structure (*ibid.*: 116). Hence, it requires collaboration between individuals who are nevertheless pursuing their own self-interest.

Coleman primarily focused upon the role of social capital in the development of human capital. He did not consider the two forms of capital in isolation, or to check the relative importance of the two; rather he strived to find out the combined role of

social and human capital in general welfare of the communities. Therefore, he borrowed the theory of rational choice from economics to sociology and it was within this intellectual framework that he pursued to place his notion of social capital. Rational choice theory in classical economics envisages social interaction as a form of exchange where all behavior results from individuals pursuing their own interests. Coleman's rational choice sociology portrays that individual actors usually follow their own self-interest and their mutual cooperation too is based upon personal interest. He further says that relationships constitute capital resources by helping to institute obligations and expectations between/among actors, creating a trustworthy environment, opening channels for information, setting norms and imposing sanction upon unwanted social behaviors of individuals. (Coleman, 1988: 102-104).

In contrast to Bourdieu, Coleman showed through extensive studies, as cited above, that social capital was not limited to the powerful elites only, rather poor and marginalized communities can equally draw upon its benefits. Although, Coleman's befitting of rational choice in the creation of social capital is acceptable when he explains that social capital is the unintended consequence or by-product of one's pursuit of self-interest. However, his definition of the concept both remained abstract and functionalist as he holds that social capital is a variety of different entities having some aspect of social structure, facilitating certain actions of individuals who are within the structure Coleman, 1994: 302).

2.2.3. Robert Putnam

Putnam enjoys much popularity in the paradigm of social capital and his contributions has leapt the borders of his professional field of political science and

attracted the attention of wider public/professionals since the publication of his landmark study, 'Bowling Alone (2000)'. Initially, he drew out from a longitudinal study of South and North Italy that comparatively better institutional performance of the northern regions was the result of mutual interrelationship between government and civil society. Putnam used the concept of social capital to explain differences in civic engagement in North and South Italy.

He defined the term after analyzing large data regarding the relative institutional performance and levels of civic engagement:

“Social capital here refers to features of social organization, such as trust, norms and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions” (Putnam, 1993a: 167).

Although in Italian study, Putnam used the concept of social capital in Colemanian's fashion in many respects; yet he concentrated more upon the importance of loose ties in accruing resources and gave little attention than Coleman to the role of church and family.

In the subsequent study, Putnam focused upon the life patterns in his native country of United States. He presented the ever declining state of America's social capital and he condemned television for its major contribution in secluding people (Putnam, 1993b; 1995; 1996). By utilizing the metaphor of League bowling, he tried to highlight the associational activities, bringing people together on regular basis aiding to build wider set of networks and values that foster general reciprocity and trust, in order to facilitate mutual collaboration in future. The elements were reflected later in his writings, and could be observed as he said, “ [that] by social capital I mean features of social life – networks, norms and trust – that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives” (Putnam, 1996: 56). In more

refined stage, Putnam presented trust (together with reciprocity) as an essential part of norms that evolve from social networks as he said, “ [that] the term here refers to connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them” (Putnam, 2000: 19).

Although Putnam got much popularity as compared to Coleman and Bourdieu, yet each of the three classics have contributed their efforts in understanding the term by giving the detail of its constituent elements. As a whole, they also laid foundation for future research in the field and portrayed an important area which could contribute a lot in expediting the pace of development process. Hence, social capital received the attention of policy makers especially the team of World Bank started to ponder over the efficacy of social capital in the development of third world countries.

2.3 Perspectives of Social Capital

World Bank team, acknowledging the importance of resources in social networks, turned to theorizing the grasping of social capital at community levels. They chalked out the role of Individual efforts at micro level and organizational contribution at meso level for inclusive policies of development. Woolcock & Narayan (2000: 2), development theorists, define social capital that “it refers to norms and network that enable people to act collectively”. In other words, social capital means the networking/relations existing between different persons or organizations for ensuring effectiveness of individuals, groups, organizations or institutions in attaining defined goals. It is acknowledged that such type of networks produce imperative results in development process as a whole and economic development in particular. Hence, development literature experiences a shift in its focus upon the importance of social relations in recent times. There are four different perspectives

delineating the relationship between social networking and sustainable economic development.

2.3.1. The Communitarian View

Proponents of communitarian view turn to local level organizations like associations, clubs and civic groups as a panacea to the prevalent disorder and disharmony created by rampant corruption, individualism and declining social norms caused by ‘Great Disruption’ since 1960 (Fukuyama, 1999). This view gauged its value by enumerating the number of these associations and its members. In analysis of poverty, communitarian view played an important role by pointing out the essential feature of social ties, especially the poor in managing risk and vulnerability. They rely immediately upon their social links that is degenerating because of their carelessness (Dordick, 1997).

This view is criticized for ignoring negative aspects of social capital of certain networks like gangs and drug cartels etc. (Portes & landolt, 1996). Rubio (1997) calls this type a ‘perverse’ social capital. In order to minimize the impact of such groups, parents pressurize children which lead to improper socialization. Even in developing countries, especially muslim countries, girls are taken out of schools that their links may outcast its benefits.

Communitarian view considers Communities as homogenous bodies delivering to all its members. But divided communities around the globe on basis of caste inequality, ethnic exclusion and gender discrimination sustained by community pressure, negates the above statement (Narayan and Shah, 2000).

Establishment of informal groups or existence of social solidarity does not automatically ignite the process of development. There are many examples from developing countries that clearly indicate the hindrances to economic prosperity of the locality. There were over 2,00,000 community groups in Kenya found by a participatory poverty assessment in rural areas but these groups were not interlinked and lacked access to power and resources and, hence, failed to eradicate poverty (Narayan & Nyamwaya, 1996). Similarly in Haiti, where social capital, rich at local level”, is incorporated by farmer groups to “meet labour requirements, gain access to land, protect clientship in the market place, promote mutual aid, assure protection from state authorities, and generally manage risk”. Still these groups failed to overcome the crippling effects of colonialism, corruption, “geographical isolation, political exclusion, and social polarization” (White and Smucker, 1998).

2.3.2. The Network View

Granovetter (1973), a pioneer of network view, circumscribed in his famous research article ‘strength of the weak ties’ a complementarity between the intra-community (strong) and inter-community (weak) ties. Where strong intra-community links work for common identity and purpose to families and communities (Astone *et al*, 1999), the weak ties among communities and organizations are also important for development and its absence may lead to sectarian interests. In other words, if vertical links are not annexed with horizontal ties then there are more chances of conflicts based upon religion, class, ethnicity, gender and socio-economic statuses. In popular literature, the strong/horizontal ties are called ‘bonding’ social capital and weak/vertical ties are called ‘bridging’ social capital (Gittell & Vidal, 1998).

Unlike communitarian perspective, networks view considers both the upside and downside of social capital theory. It has benefit and cost as well. On one hand, it facilitates members of a network to solve many problems and work as a beneficial source of information flow; on the other hand there are also costs that the same links place upon members a sense of group loyalty and obligations, which in turn, have economic consequences (Woolcock and Narayan, 2000). In agriculture economy, joint family system resisted migration of families for so long time to maintain the strong intra ties in communities but today, in poor areas even, migration to cities and Nuclearization of families is a trend that usually encourages successful individuals to switch over to vertical bonds necessary for development. Such individuals say farewell to local community and start with a new life style supported by bridging social capital. Similarly Portes & Snsenbrenner (1993) also give the example of prosperous Asian immigrants who have Anglicized their names to shun the obligation of helping newly migrated native fellows.

2.3.3. The Institutional View

The institutional view treats social capital as a dependent variable contrary to communitarian and network view. The latter considers civic organizations of a community producing ‘generalized trust’ for the uplift of that community at micro level; whereas institutional view looks for formal institutions and state to provide conducive environment for the development at macro level. These formal institutions are responsible to construe ‘generalized trust’ (see Hardin, 1993, 2002; Knack and Keefer, 1997 for the concept of generalized trust) in communities and they, in turn, will benefit from government social capital. Social groups work in a system of formal institutions where trust based relations necessarily aid to obtain collective goals that are prerequisite for development (North, 1990). At the same

time, internal coherence, credibility and competence are also necessary for states and its institutions and they should be accountable to civil society.

Institutional view stresses the importance of political, legal and institutional environment because community networks and civil society operate in the space provided. If congenial environment is provided by state, attracting social groups then it ultimately renders to high growth rate (See Skocpal, 1995, 1996; Tandler, 1997). Similarly, 'generalized trust', 'rule of law', 'civil liberties' and 'bureaucratic quality' are positively associated with growth (Knack & Keefer, 1995, 1997); whereas "social capital reduces poverty rates and improves, or at minimum does not worsen, income inequality" (Knack, 1999: 28).

Slow growth occurs in societies with high levels of fragmentation and weak political rights (see Collier & Gunning 1999; Collier 1998, 1999; Temple, 1998). Growth and development are positively co related with institutional efficiency and consensus among social groups. Weak institutions and divided communities respond passively or even indifferently towards shocks (Rodrik, 1998,1999). Easterly (1999) also makes similar argument that those societies are likely to produce stable and positive rates of growth which are able to initiate and sustain a 'middle class consensus'.

The above research shows the importance of institutional performance in the way of development that is quite relevant but it considers the phenomenon at macro level only. Poor in developing countries have no access to these organizations and actually have no option to work as social groups at policy implementation levels. This is why corruption, frustrating bureaucratic delays, ethnic conflicts, constrained

civil liberties and uncertainties to guard basic rights, obliterate efforts to materialize civic social capital and, hence, hinders sustainable development.

2.3.4. The Synergy View

This is a combination of network and institutional views on social capital. State efforts are to be complemented by community organizations. Supportive ties between private citizens and institutions in the concerned community enhance manifold the development process. Institutional camp argues that state and its organs i.e. institutions/organizations must have predetermined objectives envisaged through policy implementation; hence working at macro level for optimum growth. Contrary to it, network view has firm belief on horizontal and vertical ties in communities working as social groups at micro level. The advocates of synergy views look for a combination between micro and macro integration of these two camps on the basis of emerging patterns in development studies. Although, it is the responsibility of state to work for development in sustainable way but it can't perform by its own without the help of social actors. Similarly, social groups can not initiate large scale development projects by their own because of scarce resources. Both these variables i.e. social actors and state have positive intentions towards mutual goal of growth but they both can't work independently (World Development, 1996).

Public officials from the targeted area are responsible for efficiency to civic groups, on the one hand, and to keep institutional goals intact, on the other. Evans (1992, 1995, 1996) called it 'complementarity' and 'embeddedness'. In developing countries, institutional weakness may be addressed by civic organization for retaliation.

The whole story of development is stressing economic development especially the theories of social capital, yet we can apply it on individual fields like education. Development of education has a major stake in overall development process on one hand and the process of development in the field of education has similar patterns on the other. Here development is taken for improvement in rate of education both qualitatively and quantitatively. However, during the data collection process, I simultaneously found contradiction in the views of administrators and parents regarding the aim of education. The Executive district officers (EDOs) and the Directors (School and Literacy) theorized the importance of education as production of good citizens whereas parents, throughout the field, took getting of education only as a tool of securing job.

Part 2

2.4. Framing Social Capital Building in the Development of Education

As discussed above, the synergy view of social capital advocates the inter-community links and reciprocal support to/from organizations. Democracy ushered for individual freedom against the bureaucratic structures in the modern world; however, individual choice is curtailed by the public interest through introducing the concept of participatory development. Local community is empowered to mobilize resources through public and private ventures. That is why schools are entrusted to the locality concerned for better performance in realizing their objectives.

2.4.1. Community-School Link

In popular literature, community-school link is called ‘parental involvement’. Paucity of time and access to resources has produced somewhat different circumstances for parents in their children’s schooling. Yet, for optimum results, parental involvement has increasingly been gaining ground in the last 50 years in developed countries (Hepworth Berger, 1991).

Parents can be involved in many ways in their children’s schooling (Becker & Epstein, 1982; Epstein, 1987a, 2005a; Moles, 1993; Pelco, *et al.* 2000; Sheldon & Epstein, 2005) and there is emerging evidence that it is critically important for children’s academic success (Comer, 1988; Eccles & Harold, 1996; Epstein, 1985; Senechal & LeFevre, 2002; Sheldon & Epstein, 2005). It ranges from attending parent-teacher-council meetings, participating in sporting events, volunteering in classrooms, ensuring their (parents) children’s homework to be completed, taking children to libraries and museums and a constant communication with the teachers.

2.4.2 PTCs: its Origin, Structure and Objectives

Parents-Teachers-councils are voluntary organizations with explicit aim of working as a bridge between school and community. The PTC is not a novice idea in global scenario. Primarily, it is a mission to support schools, encourage parent involvement, coordinate with teachers and organize family events. The movement of Parent-Teachers-Association was initially launched by Alic McLellen Birney in US and the first such association was founded on February 17, 1897. Generally, the organizations focused upon improving the quality of education in advanced countries. Almost it took a century in trickling down the concept to developing countries and government of Pakistan introduced the idea in 1992 and *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa* (KP) was the first province which enacted the policy of establishing PTCs in all schools.

According to the guidelines provided by the department of education, the council consists of four members from the parents, the principal/head master/head mistress/head teacher of the school concerned, an influential person from the same locality and a retired government servant. All the members of the council are elected for a period of three academic years. Four of the parents turn into members of the council through elections held in the corresponding schools. Then, the elected parents would choose one of them as chairman/chairperson of the PTC and one of retired government servants and an influential in the locality as members while principal/head master/head mistress/head teachers will be nominated as secretary of the council. If a child of a member parent leaves the school, the membership of the parent shall cease automatically of the council. And another parent member shall

replace the ceased member by general body election of parents within a month. The Councils in female schools shall consist of female members only.

My interest here is to look for the virtual existence of the organizations coupled with its impact upon the development of education both quantitatively and qualitatively. Its structure would help us understand the trend of inculcating new/borrowed idea in local culture. Patterns of social structure are indebted to some parameters of social interaction in a local culture and PTC is also an effort to patch the social structure for supposed improvement in institutional performance through introducing networks of the local community.

PTC meetings, which is a forum to discuss different issues relating to smooth functioning of school and requires feedback from community and parents, are mandatory to be held every three months at least. Once established, the PTCs will struggle to increase enrollment, discourage dropouts, stimulate parents concerning education of their children, provide better teaching environment, create awareness about the importance of education and persuade parents to send their children, particularly girls, to schools, organize walks, debates and other activities, provide financial assistance to poor children, make efforts for character building of students, help the school staff in organizing curricular and co-curricular activities etc.

The Policy envisaged ensuring improvement in the provision of quality education, timely execution of developmental projects in schools and encouraging participation and co-operation of parents and community in educational activities. It is an effort to link the stereo-typed institutions i.e. schools labelled with street level bureaucracy, and parents/community striving for provision of basic facilities to their children in three districts having different socio-economic conditions. Generally, there is lack of

‘generalized Trust’ between the communities and government organizations and the study helped us understand the perspectives of communities and the factors behind their inclusiveness in mainstreaming development projects especially in education. The study is carried out in three different districts characterized by relative impact of modernization.

Modernization and globalization had an acute impact upon Coleman’s ‘inter-generational closure’ in traditional communities because of growing mobility and ever expanding communication. There is fast move towards egalitarian model where bureaucratic organizations have to resort for participatory approaches at community level. Parallel to it, is a shift from bonding to bridging social relations. There are fewer chances to ‘get ahead’ using bridging social capital in advanced countries. In this connection, ‘embeddedness’ of PTC’s in local community and its complementarity with school objectives caters for fulfilling six types of parental involvement mentioned by Epstein (1999, 2003) in her model. Epstein model has produced positive results through a comprehensive program of parental involvement in getting the objectives of educational strategies in developed countries (Becker & Epstein, 1982; Eccles & Harlod, 1996; Epstein, 1984, 1987; Moles, 1993). However, changing mode of life in these countries had inverse effect upon civic engagement and hence a loss of social capital (Putnam, 2000). Whereas in poor countries where people prefer to consolidate their close ties to ‘get by’. This contrasting attitude definitely influences the initiatives of social capital building in the shape of PTC’s to be supplemented by bridging social capital.

The applicability of this trend in developing countries with low literacy rate, corruption and political instability is not yet analyzed. Hence, the present research,

as explained in chapter 1, intends to manipulate the ‘trust building’ between community and government organizations/schools in formulating synergy between them that will automatically result in realizing the educational objectives through achieving six types of parental involvement.

How far are school officials/officers ready to surrender their autonomy to the public?

It is not an easy task to mobilize local people and make them participate in development activity:

“...building the capabilities of the human systems is hard. That applies to the human system called “the state.” Getting the human beings in the state to use the physical stuff available to produce the flows of improved services (learning in schools, water to farmers, cures for patients) that lead to desirable outcomes for citizens has proven much more difficult”(Andrews *et al.*, 2012: 1).

If the capabilities of the local people are not developed and they do not understand the purpose of certain policies then there is fair chance of its failure. Because, in most of the developing countries like Pakistan, there are incentives in introducing new practices and adopting new policies designed by international experts but, when applied in field, it does not fit in the local context. That is why many of such initiatives exist in papers only. Furthering their point, Andrews *et al.* (2012) say:

“Adapting from the new institutionalism literature in sociology, we suggested that reform dynamics are often characterized by ‘isomorphic mimicry’—the tendency to introduce reforms that enhance an entity’s external legitimacy and support, even when they do not demonstrably improve performance. These strategies of isomorphic mimicry in individual projects, policies and programs add up to ‘capability traps’: a dynamic in which governments constantly adopt “reforms” to ensure ongoing flows of external financing and legitimacy yet never actually improve” (ibid).

2.4.3. Link between Synergy View of Social Capital and Epstein’s Six Types of Parental Involvement

The synergy of institutional and networks views in achieving developmental goals has its basis in the conclusions from different studies published in special issue of

World Development (1996). The studies concluded that both state and local actors are variables having no property of good or bad in themselves; they do not possess all of the resources individually and it is the responsibility of the state to provide basic rights to the community and build enduring relationships among and across communities without the distinction of class, gender, ethnicity, race and religion.

To make the idea compatible with the practical application, Evans (1992, 1995, 1996) concluded that there should be supportive relations between public and private actors which he called ‘complementarity’. At the same time there should be close interconnecting ties between citizens and public officials called ‘embeddedness’. The efforts of Pakistani government of establishing PTCs in schools clearly indicates its focus upon linking community and schools in such a way that local resources are complemented with state’s resources through a plan of interdependent responsibilities on both sectors. Local people are given more representation in resolving problems for the optimum results in educational development (the issue is thoroughly discussed in chapter 7).

Part 3

2.5. Theoretical Framework of the Study

My framework is based upon combination of two models i.e. synergy view of social capital building and Epstein six types of parental involvement. The former model looks forward to forging links between public organizations and state based institutions for optimizing the process of development. Woolcock (2000) appreciated synergy model for sustainable development as a whole but my focus in using this view is restricted to study improvement in education system, through linking school and community, as a primary indicator in overall course of progress/development.

PTCs are such organizations creating synergy between two remote poles (see missing link in diagram 2.1) of school (institution) and community in Pakistan. This is a recent enterprise to support the developmental strategies and mobilize local resources for better education of children.

This study is contextual and evaluative in nature. The practice of PTC is a novice idea, an imported from developed countries rather. I selected three different districts from the province of *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa* because of heterogeneous nature in family incomes, literacy rates and rural-urban dichotomy. This is why contextual study was selected for understanding the patterns of social capital building in the form of establishing links with schools through PTCs and comparing the emerging evidences in these three locales. Further it was also designed to look for the overall improvement in child education that might have evolved as a result of synergy between school and community. I would evaluate the impact of PTCs upon fulfilling six types of Epstein model of parental involvement. Two types of this model i.e. communication and volunteering are the primary input sources of PTCs; or we may say that these two factor are complementary in synergy view of social capital building and Epstein model (see diagram 2.1 below). So, the above mentioned two types would be studied in contextual terms.

In developed countries like US, this synergy of public and private partnership helped a great deal in actualizing Epstein (1995) six types of parental involvement (Becker & Epstein, 1982; Eccles & Harlod, 1996; Epstein, 1984, 1987; Moles, 1993). These six types of parental involvement are: Parenting, Home-school communication, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making and collaborating with the community. Parents can provide home environment that is conducive to learning,

maintaining their children's health/nutritional requirements and regulating their attendance at school.

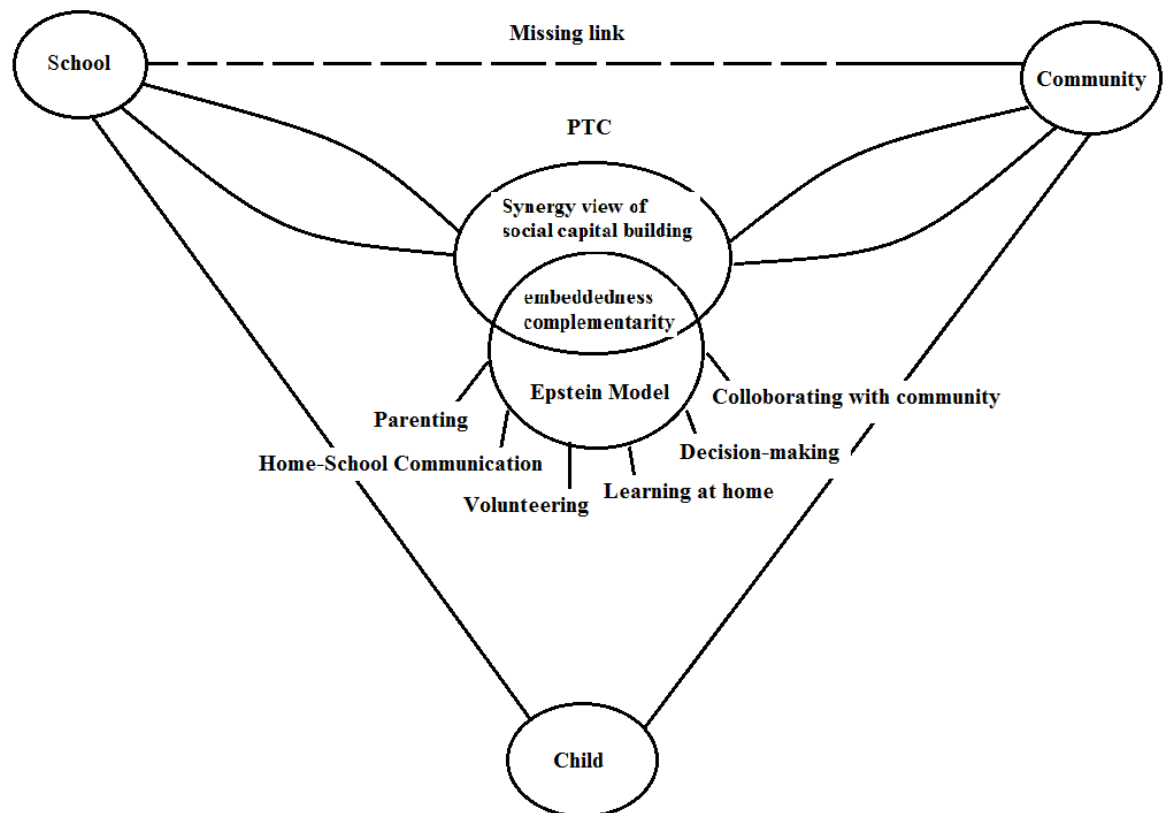
PTC meetings are effective means of school-home communication where each matter related to children are discussed and experiences on both part are shared. It helps in understanding the problems faced by teachers/administrators and parents too while retrospectively the overall progress of a child. Parents can assist schools by volunteering in class rooms, attending sports events and helping in fundraising activities. These activities aid to the welfare of schools yet it also provide a chance to show parents what school is doing for the benefits of children. The joint ventures enable parents to assist children in their homework, guide them in getting their favorite books and take them to zoo etc. for overall growth. The fifth type of parental involvement registers parents in the decision-making process in schools through PTC and other committees. Parents actually engaged in decision making process understand the whole activities of school in more positive way. The school collaborates with the community to pinpoint resources and services for the school and families, and to find out ways that the school and families can help the community (see appendix I for detail).

There is still a lot of gap in getting all the parents involved in developed countries even, especially in communities comprised of poor, ethnic, working class and lone mothers.

In developing country like Pakistan, where most of the population is divided on basis of social class, ethnicity and sectarianism, it is not an easy task to forge links between public and private quarters. It needs extensive efforts on behalf of government to create synergies among institutions and communities.

During fieldwork, I noticed that poverty and child labour continuously denounced every struggle in some parts of the country that might have led to development of education in rural areas. Whereas in semi-urban and urban areas, the situation was encouraging where community members communicate with schools to discuss students track record, general atmosphere of teaching learning process and celebrating important days of the year. It helps parents in providing conducive environment and monitors their children's activities at home. Although it would be exaggeration to say that parents take part in actual decision making process in school affairs, yet they are provided a chance to do so.

In most of PTC meetings I attended, the members endorsed the decisions made by school authorities except in few cases where community members launched the idea of some bold enterprises such as donations for clean drinking water and purchase of land for playground. The last type 'collaborating with the community' looked a far cry in local context of Pakistan. It may develop with the passage of time but at present, both private and public actors showed little interest beyond their immediate needs.

Figure 2.1**Linking synergy view of social capital building and Edpstein six types of parental involvement**

Source: Self designed

2.6. Conclusion

This chapter highlights the origin of social capital theory, its perspectives and the anticipated role of the concept in development literature. Social capital reemerged in theoretical debate since 1980s with the appearance of major contributions from Perrie Bourdieu. He tried to explain the system of class reproduction in the context of social, economic and cultural capital. Acknowledging the major/ultimate contribution of economic capital in maintenance of social hierarchy, he also focused upon the role of other forms of capital.

Coleman interest in social capital emerged from the study analyzing relationship between social capital and academic achievements in schools. He highlighted that family and community were far more important than the nature of school itself. He

regarded communities as a source of social capital that could compensate some of the effect of social and economic disadvantage within the family.

Putnam enjoys much popularity in the paradigm of social capital and his contributions attracted the attention of wider public/professionals since the publication of his landmark study, *Bowling Alone* (2000). He found that comparatively better institutional performance in a community was the result of mutual interrelationship between government and civil society and he used the concept of social capital to explain the differences in civic engagement.

Borrowing the concept of social capital to development, Michael Woolcock suggested the synergy view for the development of underdeveloped areas. He holds that institutional social capital along with social links with communities could intensify the efforts for improvements. In the light of this argument, PTCs are taken as a resource in bridging links between schools and communities for the development of education. Epstein's six types of parental involvement are considered as a measuring rod for gauging the inclusiveness of parents/communities in decision making process for the improvement of teaching learning process. In other words, PTCs are considered as a tool of social capital building in the development of education. Hence, the study is designed to look for the implications of Parents-Teachers-Councils in synergizing school and community. Being a nuance idea in implementation and borrowed by nature of origin, qualitative research method is used to address the issue.

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, the concept of social capital was explored in the existing literature of development, and more specifically, the recent manipulation of the idea through PTCs in the improvement of education in Pakistan. It was generally observed in the literature cited in the previous chapter that school community links ushered additional resources to the institutions and seconded them in getting their objectives. Thus, to understand on-the-ground reality of the effectiveness of social capital building through PTCs in the overall promotion of education, this chapter outlines and describes the overall procedure employed in addressing this question.

To ensure sequence in grasping the procedure/methodology employed in this study, it is divided into three parts. Part I describes the nature of the study and research philosophy. Part II reflects upon the issues relating to research site while Part III explains research tools used in data collection.

Part I

3.2. Qualitative Research Methodology

Putnam (2000) undoubtedly propounded the idea of social capital in a forceful manner. In contrary, he also invited the wrath of critics who challenged the efficacy of social capital in understanding the ills of modern life style; because, he could not present a holistic picture to critics, planners and policy makers on decreasing level of social networks. The quantitative data gathered about civic engagement in US in his famous contribution ‘bowling alone’ could not suffice to construct individual realities.

Therefore, the present study is designed to be qualitative in nature to dig out a detailed, subjective and panoramic picture of the phenomenon (see Cresswell, 1998; Bryman, 1984; Kincheloe, 1991). It is intended to look for the trend of social capital building in the form of formal organization through PTCs and their effectiveness in improving teaching-learning process in schools.

3.3. Research Philosophy

Social sciences deal with human beings and it is not easy to understand the drives behind their actions. It is only possible if we suspend our own cultural assumptions and understand the ways of thinking and feeling, modes of action; how they create and interpret their social world (Hammersley 2013). Interpretivism inclines to view the world in the same way, contrasting to positivism, requiring a different response from researchers. According to Bryman and Bell (2007), interpretivists take the view that:

“The subject matter of the social sciences—people and their institutions—is fundamentally different from that of the natural sciences. The study of the social world, therefore requires a different logic of research procedure” (2007: 17).

It is deliberated that there are multiple realities that make measurement difficult, and we can only pursue to comprehend real-world phenomena by studying them in detail within the context in which they occur. Interpretivism primarily focuses on people’s own meaning and face to face interaction, that human life is understood through the meanings and perceptions by which people make sense of their lived experiences. Hence, I adopted interpretivist position to look at my respondent’s views regarding PTC’s and their functioning as a mediatory source of social capital building in the study.

My aim in this study is to go beyond evaluating the implementation of government policy measures undertaken in the form of establishing PTC's. As introduction of the organizations is not a novel idea and it has a long history in developed countries like US since 1817 (see chapter 2 for detail). It was a step to bridge the gap between community and school to manipulate the resources available therein both at community and organizational levels for producing more inputs in child's education. In developing countries like Pakistan, it will take few decades to see their impact upon effectiveness of school strategies. So this study is rather an endeavor to focus upon the concern of social capital building at community level in the light of synergy view as theoretical model (Woolcock 2000). This will help in understanding the casual factors responsible for synergy between organizations/schools and communities. Although main focus of the study is upon micro level interaction of individuals with government organizations, yet it will help us understand the broad macro level concerns about policies at national level.

So keeping in mind this difference in the research locale i.e. from the developed countries where this practice was originated, I would draw out the image of reality by interpreting the responses of school administrators, teachers, PTC members, parents and students. The diverse perspectives would elucidate the multiple approaches to the emerging patterns of social capital building. At the same time, efforts were also made to see behind the fronts through checking record of PTC's, contrasting the individual realities.

3.4. Ethnographic Approach

Being cognizant to the experiences of existing patterns of intra/inter communal relationships of the local culture, the study was based on ethnographic approach.

Because, the common man had been marginalized in participating the public goods contribution through socially engineered power structure for so long time. As the study concentrates upon analyzing the impact of a nascent intervention in the existing and long established course of action, hence, it was decided to directly interact with the communities and provide them a chance where the respondents could freely express their views. The stakeholders were experts of my research, instead of mere subjects to be studied (Burns, 2000: 393). Efforts were made to probe deep into the real world (Fielding, 1993; Clifford, 1997) and understand the views of parents/communities regarding private-public partnership in the development of education envisaged through PTCs. Pakistani society, in general, and *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa*, in particular, is in its transitional phase where old patterns are being demolished and new emerging ideas are yet indeterminate. So, the researcher, instead of quantifying uncertainties, intends to use ethnographic approach so that social realities can be comprehended in totality. By utilizing ethnographic, rather bottom-up approach, it was anticipated to provide a suitable platform to the poor parents for expressing their views freely (see Gedicks, 1979).

3.5. Multiple Case Study Design

I carried out my research in the three districts of *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa* as individual cases. Case study design was selected in order to understand the recently introduced phenomenon in different cultural setting. Yin (2003) considers the research design appropriate where questions of ‘how’ and ‘why’ are probed and where it becomes necessary to cover contextual questions in a study. I intended to look for the trend of social capital building in the form of formal organizations in schools, so a detailed, subjective and panoramic picture of the phenomenon was the ultimate end (Cresswell, 1998; Bryman, 1984; Kincheloe, 1991). The three districts selected in

the study were treated as individual cases in overall multiple case study design to explore differences within and between the cases (Op. Cited).

Furthermore, this study was designed to look for implications of synergy view of social capital building in the development of education (Narayan & Woolcock, 2000) and its role in fulfilling the six types of community/parental involvement in education (Epstein, 1995). Hence, multiple case design helped in comparing communities in three different districts and portray a more vivid picture of the reality.

Part 2

3.6. Research Site

As discussed above, the establishment of PTC is mandatory for all government schools throughout the province. *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa* is divided into 25 districts for administrative purpose. Executive District Officer (School & Literacy) performs his/her duties as head of schools in a district. Literacy rate varies from one district to another, depending upon the socio-cultural and economic factors.

Table 3.1 Literacy Rates of Pakistan, KP and Three selected Districts

Location	BOTH SEXES			MALE			FEMALE		
	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
<i>Pakistan</i>	43.92	33.64	63.08	54.81	46.38	70	32.02	20.09	55.16
<i>KP</i>	35.41	31.29	54.33	51.39	47.65	67.48	18.82	14.69	39.10
<i>Shangla</i>	14.70	14.70	-	25.20	25.20	-	3.70	3.70	-
<i>Karak</i>	41.90	41.10	53.80	68.20	67.60	75.60	18.10	17.20	31.80
<i>Abbottabad</i>	56.61	51.85	76.73	74.52	71.33	85.69	39.11	34.18	64.71

Source: 1998 District Population Census Report of *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa*.

The locale of the present study was comprised of three districts i.e. *Karak*, *Shangla* and *Abbottabad* on the basis of changing patterns of literacy rate, community

structures, democratic behaviors and language/dialect. The factors play a pivotal role in the differentiation of urban/rural dichotomy leading to pervasiveness of bonding, bridging and linking social capital (Woolcock, 2000). Furthermore, there is gradual change in awareness in people coupled with inclination from homogeneity of society towards heterogeneity as we move from district *Shangla* to *Karak* and then to *Abbottabad*. This nature of relationships ultimately influences the aptitudes of people. The poor, for example, may have a close knit and intensive stock of “bonding” social capital that they leverage to “get by” (Briggs 1998; Holzmann and Jorgensen 1999), but be lacking in the more diffuse and extensive “bridging” social capital deployed by the non-poor to “get ahead” (Kozel and Parker 1998; Barr 1998; Narayan 1999).

Owing to poverty and lack of communication with cities, people in rural areas of *Shangla* have little access to media and hence they live in small homogenous groups ‘to get by’ only. Whereas in District *Karak*, we observe more awareness in people and they find more diverse ways ‘to get ahead’. In district *Abbottabad*, where majority of population lives in cities with more chances of communication and education which in turn provide multiple sources of development.

Selection of the three districts would aid to comprehensive picture of the trend of social capital building and would come up with more factors in realizing the objectives of PTCs. Comparing and contrasting the assumed difference in community links would help in understanding the process of social capital building and its impact upon children’s education. Furthermore, the three districts are taken

from three main areas in KP called north regions, south region and *hindko/seraiki*⁴ built.

Table 3.1 shows the overall literacy rate in Pakistan and then in the province of *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa* leading to categorical representation of literacy rate situation in the selected three districts. In the absence of any available alternative, we have to rely upon the data because no broad and compact study is made at micro level like census after 1998.

District *Karak* has one of the highest literacy rates (41.9%) (District Census Report, 1998). It is situated in the south of Peshawar. It is comprised of arid land and most of it is rural in nature with meager chances of agricultural productions. There are no industries in the district; hence its inhabitants are conscious of the importance of education as a mean of sustenance, whereby having no other option except to educate their children so as to make them eligible for getting a job. Due to its rural setting and less facilities available for female education, low female literacy rate (18.1%) is a weak counterpart in a total literacy rate. Low female literacy rate in rural areas in particular with labor force participation rate of 1.88 accounts for bifurcation of male and female sphere (see table 3.2 below); where women do domestic duties and male do job for earning livelihood (District Census Report 1998).

As discussed above, parental involvement has clear implications across classes in developed countries like US (Epstein 1999). If we compare the situation with developing country like Pakistan, we would look for influence of class structure

⁴Seraiki and Hindko are local languages other than Pashto spoken in areas of KP like Hazara division, Peshawar city and D.I.Khan.

upon community involvement. In describing the sources of income of people in the district, we mean to draw some assumptions about the chances of horizontal/vertical mobility catering for bridging social capital. In other words, inhabitants of the area work in various departments across the country, interacting with people from diverse backgrounds that help them change their statuses.

Table 3.2 Labor Force Participation Force Rates

Location	BOTH SEXES			MALE			FEMALE		
	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
Pakistan	31.98	31.94	32.07	59.24	60.19	57.53	2.23	1.88	2.89
KP	29.09	28.86	30.13	55.52	56.22	52.55	1.64	1.12	4.18

SOURCE: 1998 District Population Census Report of *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa*

The second district to be examined was *Shangla* with one of the lowest literacy rates (14.70%) (District Census Report 1998). It is situated in the extreme corner of *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa* on north-east. Socio-economic conditions in the district are different from that of district *Karak* but predominant of its areas is rural in nature. Typical rural nature of society and male members working outside the areas obligates the inhabitants to live in small well-knit communities in the mountainous localities. The people either work menial jobs like daily wagers in hotels, drivers, wood cutters/choppers and office boys in their localities or go to far flung areas for manual jobs. Most of the population is poor and children work in hotels or help their families in fetching woods and other daily requirement in the season of summer as they cannot move in winter because of heavy snowfall.

District *Abbottabad* is declared a ‘model district’ by the Directorate of School and Literacy Department, *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa*. It has the highest literacy rate (56.61%) in the province (District Census Report 1998). Majority of the schools in the district

are situated in urban or semi-urban areas. There are few most reputable educational institutions like Burn Hall, City School, *Abbottabad* public school etc. that have attracted many people to settle here for providing quality education to their children. Similarly, army cantonment and Army training center for officers (Kakool Academy) further contributes in providing an atmosphere for competition in quality education⁵. Heterogonous nature of community in the district coupled with more chances of quality education make a conducive atmosphere for bridging links; hence locating the area in different patterns for social capital building.

3.7. Procedure for Selecting Respondents

There are 39 Government Higher Secondary Schools in the three districts. It was planned to select 12 schools out of the total and hence 4 schools i.e. 3 male and 1 female, were selected from each district randomly. Although, the number of Government Higher Secondary Schools in each of the district varied, yet selection of equal number was allocated to each of them for comparing the three districts. The rationale for selecting only GHSS is that the schools get handsome financial aid in the PTC's head and, hence, experience more pressure for involving community. There are six members of every PTC; principal of the institution, a local leader, a counselor and three parents. Principal of the schools is the secretary, while the chairman and members are elected for three years through voting by the parents in annual meeting. Bank account is maintained jointly by chairman and secretary of the PTC. The organization bridges the community with the school and helps to reciprocate one another for general welfare of the community. To understand how it is placed in social situation elucidating the contribution it has made, its merits to

⁵In Pakistan, army cantonments have a popular concept for cleanliness and standard education and hence provide a healthy competitive atmosphere for quality education.

contribution and challenges confronted to it would be the focus in selecting the respondents.

First, to understand the functioning of PTCs, group interviews were conducted in PTC's meetings. For individual in-depth interviews, 2 teachers, 2 students and 2 members from parents were selected through purposive sampling. In district *Karak* and district *Abbottabad*, I interviewed 4 mothers of female and 12 fathers of male students. Whereas in district *Shangla*, PTCs in girl schools consisted of male members of family because of cultural reasons and lowest rate of female literacy annexed with lowest female labour participation rate (see table 3.1 and 3.2). So I had to select male members of family for individual interviews. Although low labour participation rate also implies for the other two districts i.e. *Karak* and *Abbottabad* and I had the risk of would-be probability of uncertain female role in PTCs here too, however, I found the situation quite encouraging in district *Karak*, especially in district *Abbottabad*. It might be the reason that I had to rely upon old data whereas a lot of development has occurred since then in almost every field. As discussed above, most of the fathers in district *Shangla* were residing outside their villages/towns, therefore I had to select uncles or retired personnel i.e. retired teachers of the areas who were communicating with the schools.

Using purposive sampling had explicit reasons: since PTCs are new enterprises that give space to community members in decision making process in school affairs and many teachers are unwilling to suspend their authoritative position; mostly the convener of every class is responsible for issues regarding students and its handling. Similarly, parents have diverse backgrounds and many of them have minimal engagement with school that could be of little help in delineating the links between

school and community. Parents, specifically mothers have deep affiliation with their children. They understand the delicate intricacies of the personality of their children and they take great pains to mint their individualities through imparting best possible way of education. Today, it is undeniable fact that nurture plays important role in socialization of children and community, school, religion and peers are key socializing agents. That is why mothers started the movement of PTAs in developed world not only to care for their own children but raised their voice for all children of the whole communities. In my research locale, mothers themselves are less educated, hence male family members are entrusted with the duty of children education. At the same time, male family members resort to earning livelihood for them in first place where poverty mitigates the chances of children education. This is the reason that we see gradual change in the mindset of parents when we look at the data from *Shangla* to *Karak* and then to *Abbottabad*. There is low literacy rate in *Shangla*, it improves when we move to district *Karak* and then it becomes better when we reach to District *Abbottabad*.

Whereas selection of students was not so problematic except they could shun shyness to express themselves in front of an outsider. Basically, the whole system of education is designed for polishing the skills of new generation in the most positive way. Whatever the method of evaluation would be; it would definitely revolve around the child. Furthermore, learner is not a passive ingredient but rather an entity with an urge to observe and understand things minutely. So it was regarded necessary to ask student's perceptions about school and home environment and parent's contribution, specifically in their education.

As stated earlier that introduction of PTC is policy implemented by government through formal bureaucratic organization; hence it was decided that key position holders in the hierarchy should also be interviewed for understanding the phenomenon in wider context. So the administrative cadre i.e. Principals, Executive District Officers and Director (S&L) were interviewed individually about the practice of PTC.

3.8. Accessing My Respondents

Embarking on the field for data collection was gigantic task, especially in the two districts of *Abbottabad* and *Shangla*; as the third district i.e. *Karak* was my home town. I took letter from the supervisor on department letter head directed to the director of education for institutional help in selected districts. I succeeded in getting forwarding letters to the concerned District Education Officers (EDO's) after visiting the office of the director for few consecutive days as 'red tapism' is a routine practice of every bureaucratic government organizations in Pakistan. Lack of interest from institutional camps is one of the reasons that hinders the required synergy between government organizations and local community members for getting development goals. This issue will further be elaborated in chapter 5 while analysing the response of the authorities concerned.

I started my field work from my own district i.e. *Karak* where my social capital helped me in getting easy access to the respondents. My work experience for ten years along with my father's job background in education department provided friends and colleagues who helped me easy access to schools without even taking permission of the 'gatekeepers'. EDO who was my father's friend aided me in selection of 4 schools i.e. 3 male and 1 female, on the bases of accessibility,

heterogeneity and difference in community response towards school. Then he called the principals of the concerned schools for all possible cooperation. In Pakhtun culture, any male cannot enter into the female school except the higher authorities, so the EDO accompanied me in his car to the girls school. He introduced me to the principal and, fortunately, she was my friend's wife. Similarly, another school was the one where I had worked for ten years and my personal relationship helped me in generating first hand data smoothly. The staff members knew about my studies in advance and hence they fully cooperated. In another school, the principal was my friend with whom I had worked for three years. The principal of fourth school in the district was my neighbor who happily extended his services to fully support my research project. The staff and communities were not hesitant to address the issue rather they were bold enough to draw it in black and white. Being an 'insider' within a study, according to Sudbury (1998), it benefits the researcher in providing additional insight and knowledge about the community under study. In my case, it helped me in selecting sampled schools as I knew all the characteristics about the schools and the communities. As the 'trust-based relations' were established beforehand, so generating data was not problematic (Field 2003:64).

My next visit was to *Shangla* which was unfamiliar place for me: while I was waiting for two hours in front of EDO office when brother of my friend arrived there. He was a representative of INGO working in collaboration with education department and his reference made things easy for me in getting to my respondents. The EDO then called to the principals of 3 boys and 1 girl's higher secondary school for all possible help. The schools were situated very far from each other as the population was scattered around on mountainous area. I hired a taxi and a local driver who helped me a lot in finding the localities and also helped in explaining

what my respondents told about synergy of school and community. Before going to the specified schools, I called the principals and took appointment on my cell phone. They welcomed my arrival and arranged PTC meetings on that day. My driver took me to different homes for interviewing parents.

In my last district, the EDO kept me waiting for three days to issue letters to the concerned schools. On the first day he was on leave; on second day he asked to come tomorrow and on third day he kept me waiting in corridor for three hours. When I asked how much should I wait further, I was told that the ‘sahib’⁶ has gone outside for some pressing engagement. I found no other option but to resort to use my own social capital. One of my friends in education department in provincial secretariat contacted the sampled schools using his authoritative position and then I moved to those areas for collecting data.

Although, using my own social capital in the field raises moral and ethical questions that are rarely discussed (Plumer 2001), yet its use was somewhat necessary to get into the field for generating reliable data. For example, I bypassed the EDO office in district *Abbottabad* for getting into the field because I waited for three days and the concerned personnel intentionally gave me tough time. Secondly, in district *Shangla*, the school administrators offered me help in contacting parents but I refused because of getting diversity in my data.

⁶‘sahib’ is an urdu word usually used by his attendant for the officer occupying the seat meaning ‘sir’.

Part 3

3.9. Multiple Sources

The current study is not based upon an isolated event that could be comprehended by implying a single tool like participatory observation. There are two stakeholders i.e. schools and community, having a common goal i.e. child education, but they differ in their standing. The present study focuses upon understanding forging links between the two poles using interpretivist approach (see diagram 2.1 for the missing link between the two poles). So to get the 'insider view', according to Blaiki (2000), of the two parties, individual and group interviews were conducted for getting data from the sources of data i.e. teachers, administrators, students and parents (Mason 2006). However, keeping in mind the practice of corruption especially in government organizations, observation would also be made in PTC meetings, going through its record, and in communities.

Details of such tools are given below:

3.10. Participant Observation

According to the constitution of PTC, every school must hold meetings at least after every three months where efficiency of the previous quarter/month is scrutinized and an applicable scheme of priorities for the future is addressed. I participated in such meetings carefully observing the whole activity. My aim was to see the actual setting where community and school administrators are sitting and discussing different problems jointly; and observe the nature of relationships between the two stakeholders. It vividly reflected the impact of class upon the level of participation in PTC and inclusiveness in decision making which lead to analyzing the attitudes of

principals about parents belonging to different classes (see chapters 4, 5 and 6 for detail).

Usually, parents from middle classes are given importance, poor parents are also included in PTCs yet they remain silent in decision making process. So it was focused upon which class of people actually takes part in decision making of schools (it will be further discussed in chapter 4). Similarly, I observed the process of putting every detail on record and I verified the recorded events of PTC. Although, in few schools the principals were uncomfortable in showing the record as it was poorly maintained but I assured its use for purely academic purpose. There were reports that some schools make a fake PTC and use name of secretary for embezzlement. Similarly, while conducting interviews with parents/any family member communicating with the school, I gave much time to examine the local culture, their attitudes towards children, their way of life and collective behavior. As discussed earlier, my locale consisted of three areas which were quite different or somewhere even opposite like rural urban comparison, high awareness/low awareness, homogeneity and heterogeneity. I wanted to see the general attitude of adults towards children in the community. The observations were rather a check on the individual reality made by the respondents in individual and group interviews.

Being the member of the same society and a part of education department for 10 years, I have experienced that none of the both parties are prepared to shoulder their responsibility in children education. Parents argue that teachers are paid heavy salaries for their duties but they do not perform their task properly. On the other hand, school administration considers parents to be irresponsible in their children's education because students spend more time in homes rather than in schools.

Therefore, first hand observation would help a great deal in understanding the actual dilemma of irresponsibility.

3.11. Group and Individual Interviews

Data was generated through individual, group interviews and participant observations in the field. Voice recorder was used to record interviews with the permission of interviewees. Then on the same nights, I transcribed the interviews to English as it was feared that I may not lose the context of any word or sentence. Informal group interviews were conducted with the chairman, secretary and members after formal PTC's meeting in every school in order to find about the essence of the organization as perceived by the administrators and community. The interviews were informal in nature and stress was upon to know whether the participants understood their duty in the light of proposed objectives. Further, efforts were made to unfold the myth of community inclusiveness in decision making process.

The interviews were conducted in PTC meetings in concerned schools consequent upon the instruction from EDOs. In the start, the principals introduced me and my research objectives to the members and then set up for the routine schedule. I took permission of recording the whole activity for my research purpose only and they agreed to it. Parallel to it, I also took notes of important points. While they were discussing different problems in school and their solution, I was observing the power relation between the two stake holders and the enthusiasm of the community members. I felt that community took the gathering as part of the formalities designed by the government to affirm just the routine running of schools. In most cases, PTC's members approved what principals moved on the floor. Usually the principals

gave detail of fiscal expenditures from PTC funds and demonstrated the future plans for using the fund. The members affirmed his/her proposals and signed the resolution written by principals. The retired school teachers and counselors somewhat contributed in discussing the overall improvement in education of children. The other members remained silent or just nodded their heads, approving the on-going discussions.

Only in district *Abbottabad*, I observed that members were enthusiastically participating and principals approved what they proposed like provision of huge playground, demarcation of permanent school boundary wall, provision of water coolers and digging of dug wells. I also went through the record of the activities conducted through joint venture of school and community looking for consistency and efficiency. At the end of every meeting I asked the members about objectives, functions and benefits of PTCs and their responsibilities in government mission of 'educated Pakistan'. (See chapter 4 for more detail).

In group, unstructured interviewing was more advantageous in eliciting flow of natural responses about the complexities without any unusual breaks except where interview guide interfered (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). It was observed that respondents usually referred the issue of malfunctioning of school to the corrupt practices of politicians and their unnecessary interference in the school affairs; so it was necessary to turn the communication to the topic of collective efforts on behalf of communities and schools.

After the PTC meetings, individual interviews were conducted with the principals for elaborate discussion about pros and cons of involving community in schools affairs. My query focused upon the democratic behavior, administrators' attitudes

towards community participation, their experiences in the whole process and among others, their point of views for further steps to be taken in popularizing the essence of the organizations. Although, they lauded the idea of community participation yet they feared its negative impacts upon development of education because of political interference.

With the permission of principals, I talked to 2 teachers in each school in their offices/secluded rooms individually. I asked them about general issues regarding student's attendance, their results, parent's interests, reasons for high/low ratio of educational achievement of students and adaptation strategies for positive change in it. Then I moved to dig the reality of PTCs in augmenting school and community especially its role in resolving routine matters of poor attendance and consultation of parents in understanding the personalities of their children and proper doing of homework. I also tried to verify the congruence in teachers and principals strategies in forging synergy with community.

Interviewing students individually was essential as the ultimate goal of social capital building in the shape of PTCs was to equip the new generation with all possible skills. In this respect, 2 students in each GHSS were interviewed to draw out their views about their parent's involvement in schools affairs and its impact upon teachers' responses towards their individual identities. I probed the intentions of admission in school, their daily routine and their parents' response towards their education.

Finally, me and my driver embarked upon interviewing parents. We had already taken addresses from the students and principals and first contacting them on cell phone, we met them in their home/outside their homes. It was easy to consult

fathers/mothers of students in district *Karak* and *Abbottabad* but in district *Shangla* I had to talk to guardians like uncles or retired school teachers/councilors/maliks⁷ of the students who were in contact with the schools for the children of whole small community. I enquired about the school efforts in inviting them to schools for active participation in school's matters, general atmosphere of teaching-learning process, principal/teachers' attitude towards their duties, students timetable in homes and their contributions in development of education. The initiative of PTC, its present state and its future in children's achievements were also discussed in the interview.

In contrast to group interviews, individual interviews were conducted with principals and parents/community members to give them space where they could freely express their views upon the activities and performance of the organizations (see Punch, 1998. Merton and Kendall, 2003). The two types of interviews were complementary in nature, catering for personal spaces and cross-checking, as there was contrast in individual and group interviews regarding the proper functioning of the organizations. In combined interviews with the two stake holders, the community members approved the sayings of principals because they tried to avoid any type of confrontation with the authorities that may harm schooling of their children in future. (Interview guide is attached as annexure V)

3.12. Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations are important in any study and, hence, extreme care was taken of in the whole process. There is growing debate over research ethics in social sciences particularly focussing the preservance of participant's confidentiality, anonymity, consent and risk. Qualitative research caters for variety of probing areas

⁷ Malik is a head of the small community who take care of all the matters and all people obey him. His decision is final in almost every aspect of life.

that need different treatments and hence a single system of ethical codes can't work. This is why a range of approaches is offered for different types of social researches like consequentialist approach, principlist approach, ethics of care and virtue ethics (Wiles, 2013).

Consequentialist approaches argue that ethics should be decided on the basis of better outcomes to individuals or wider society without following prescribed rules. The principlist approach draws on the principles of respect for people's autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence and justice in deciding about ethical consideration in field. Proponent of ethics of care are more concerned with the notion of care for participants rather than following rules or looking for maximum benefits for the society. Whereas virtue ethics focuses on the moral character of the researcher; the researcher is supposed to show strength of decent attitude and healthy interaction with the respondents (Wiles, 2013).

In the current research, principlist approach was adopted for guidance in making ethical decisions while generating data in the field because the nature of study had little/no such chances where secret recordings, pressing demands for confidentiality or direct benefits of the respondents were required/demanded for larger interest/participants care. In subsiding the impact of power relation between the principals and community members in group interviews, individual interviews with parents were arranged to give a free space to them for probing reality. Similarly, factual situation in the field was presented to the authorities of education department while interviewing them without compromising the anonymity of individual respondents.

Although, I had got letters from the Director of Schools and Literacy to EDO's and then from EDO's to principals of schools prior to my visits in the field, yet I contacted the principals through phone. I took their consents telling the objectives of my research project, assuring them that the data will only be used for this research and the names of the schools will not be mentioned anywhere. They welcomed me and provided full support in reaching to my respondents ranging from parents, teachers and students. In schools, the principals had already told the teachers and students about my project in advance and hence it was easy to interview them.

I introduced having served myself for ten years in education department and my father's history of being part of education department helped me in creating rapport with the principals and teachers. They considered me well informed about the activities of the school and rendered actual information. I managed to create affinity with the parents of different districts differently. I wore local dress in district *Shangla* and used to stop my car outside the locality. I walked on foot to meet fathers/guardians of students. Whereas in District *Abbottabad* where people were well off, I visited them in formal dressing. The strategies were adopted to minimize the power relations between me and my respondents.

3.13. Analysis

The data generated through individual, group interviews and participant observations were analyzed using frame work analysis approach. Although, introduction of PTCs is a policy measure undertaken by the government to improve the standard of education in Pakistan, yet, apart from its evaluative function, the present study focusses upon sociological patterns emerging from the policy implementation and its

impacts upon community attitudes/behaviors. Hence, it would be contextual and evaluative in nature as well.

The data was analyzed across institutional plus network camps (synergy view of social capital building); their mutual relationship in the development of education. The term ‘development of education’ has taken many forms from basic level of increasing enrolment ratio, curtailing dropout rates to higher level of promoting quality education. Hence the role of PTCs in applying Epstein’s six types of parental involvement and its impact upon promoting the quality of education was also analysed. In other words, efforts were made to gauge the function of PTC as a tool in grabbing the fruits of Epstein’s model.

As the data was generated by me, so it was not difficult, at familiarization stage, to go through the transcribed interviews and field notes. The key concepts and themes were identified for devising thematic framework. This stage was not an easy task to be taken for granted, rather;

“Devising and refining a thematic framework is not an automatic or mechanical process, but involves both logical and intuitive thinking. It involves making judgements about meaning, about the relevance and importance of issues, and about implicit connections between ideas” (Ritchie.j and Spencer.L, 1994: 180).

My experience in education department and sharing the same culture helped me a lot in finding major themes and understanding the meanings attached to the concepts used by individuals.

Under the main themes, index categories were formed in the light of both my research objectives and questions being asked in the field. I had to apply the index categories upon three districts separately because there is remarkable but gradual variation in data for district *Shangla* to *Karak* and then to *Abbottabad*. Charting of

data under relevant theme was done for mapping and interpreting the supposed search/emergent concepts. At the end, resultant findings were gauged in the light of synergy view of social capital building aiding in fulfilling six types of Epstein model.

3.14. Conclusion:

The present study was based upon questions like ‘how’ and ‘why’ which prompted me to adopt qualitative research method. In order to understand the on-ground reaction of people towards a contrasting policy of community involvement in public goods contribution in a long held bureaucratic environment, ethnographic approach was selected. Opting multiple case studies helped in comparing different localities for improved understanding. Similarly, triangulation of research tools aided rigorous nature of the study, catering for cross checking of the data and implying more transparency. Furthermore, framework analysis was chosen for measuring the data gathered. At the end, principlist approach was used corroborating to the ethical standards.

In the next chapter, the procedure decided here would be executed in presenting the data gathered in district *Shangla* as the first case study.

4.1. Introduction:

In the previous chapter I elaborated the overall methodology employed in this study. Multiple case study design was primarily selected to compare and contrast three different districts and to understand the pros and cons of government policy of bridging links between school and community. In this chapter, the account of different stakeholders of district *Shangla* is presented. This account consists of a framework that has five major themes where the concerned respondents' views would be presented in a logical manner.

The chapter starts with introducing the selected four schools/communities of district *Shangla* and then moves on to the presentation of data gathered in a thematic way. The themes are; stake holders' perception about school-community links, institutional goals and its realization, aims and objectives of PTCs, level/status of community school partnership in Pakistan and manipulation of PTC as a tool in the development of education. Further, it is pertinent to mention that the same framework would also be applied to the other two districts of *Karak* and *Abbottabad* in the succeeding chapters.

4.2. Communities/schools in District *Shangla*

District *Shangla* consists of small communities scattered on mountainous areas reflecting the rural life style of the inhabitants. It represents one of the typical areas representing 'Pakhtun' culture. The people are soft and hospitable. Women are mostly restricted to their homes and domestic needs like provision of daily commodities are the responsibility of menfolk. There are no industries and small

tract of land is available for cultivation. Many facilities like gas are not available for kitchen; that is why people resort to cutting trees on mountains to use it for burning.

Consistent with low literacy rate, little land for cultivation and low pace of development (see table 3.1 and 3.2); most of the male members of family have shifted to other parts of the country where they perform their duties mostly as labors while those remaining work usually as low paid employees in government or private organizations nearby. It is a general phenomenon that interdependency among humans increases in poor communities and they resort to maintain the traditional bonds for satisfaction of mutual needs. Hence, '*Hujra*'⁸ is still functional in the area where all the people of a community sit and exchange their views on daily issues. These discussions in *hujra* range from weather to national and international politics. The people talk about foreign policy of the country and everyone considers himself expert in criticizing it. As one of the wise members of the locality told me that these illiterate people cannot read time in an analogue watch but consider themselves as experts on super power's foreign policy. Being the part of *pakhtun* community, I have noticed that school and education of children has never been the topic under consideration in '*hujra*'.

Schools, like *hujra* and mosque, are not owned by them and the same was reinforced by the director of education department when I interviewed him. The masses think that school is established by the government and it is the responsibility of government to monitor and ensure its smooth running. Most of the community members did not show any interest in school's affairs. The schools looked secluded structures standing at a distance from routine life of the communities. I visited four

⁸ '*Hujra*' is an *urdu* word use for a large, open building usually situated in center a community. It is a common property of all the community members where social programs like marriage and death ceremonies are conducted.

schools and the surrounding communities for getting data collection. I found that all the four communities were alike in social standing with little difference in their personalities, attitudes and aptitudes.

Majority of the people were residing in mud/semi-cemented houses on mountains. The number of *hujras*, annexed with a mosque in a community ranges from one to four or many. More than one *hujra* in a community meant some differences or existence of conflict between/among different groups. Most of these groups have no affiliation with a specific political party; therefore the *hujras* are used for political canvassing during election times. Usually a group/community gathers and presents a list of demands to the candidates of national or provincial assembly and who so ever promises to fulfill their demands is supported in election. These demands may include provision of drinking water, employment, electricity, gas and establishment/up-gradation of schools/Basic Health Units (BHUs). Many of such facilities are available in settled areas; however speedy population growth leads to populating undeveloped areas. Provision of these facilities becomes very difficult in mountainous areas. All these decisions are made by male members of the family and females are not even allowed to cast vote in the general election.

4.2.1. School/Community No. 1

My first boys school was situated in one corner of the district where life style was completely rural and most of the people were poor. Majority of the students' fathers were working in far off area of *Sindh*⁹ in coal mines as labors. School building was old and looked vulnerable. There was no girls high school in the area and, hence giving way to co-education in the boys school. Strength of the school was 500 and

⁹ *Sindh* is one of the five provinces of Pakistan and it is called the place of Sindhi people. *Karachi* is the most populous city and main hub of business in Pakistan.

its overall result was 80% in the current year. A boy student of the school got 3rd position in Secondary School Certificate (SSC) board examination in session 2013 while a girl student had got 1st position in SSC a year earlier.

A young man in his late forties had been working as acting principal for the last two years. He belonged to other locality of the district; living in joint family with five children. He told that this school is far from his locality and it was very difficult to bring his children with him every day because of poor transportation. At the same time he was dissatisfied with the efficiency of local government school in his own locality and that was why he decided to admit his three school going children in a private school. Two sampled teachers of the school belonged to the same community. They were in their fifties with smart dispositions. As marriage at early age was/is a practice in *Pakhtun* culture; children of these teachers were studying in colleges. Both of them declared proudly that their children had studied from their school.

One of the student representatives came from well off family of the community whose father had died and the elder brother, who had done bachelor in pharmacy, was his guardian. He was little bit shy but the principal told that he had been the topper for four consecutive years and was believed to get brilliant position in upcoming SSC examination. The second student was a son of a class IV employee of the school. He was studying in class XI with three other brothers in lower classes in the school. He told that his three sisters had studied only to class V because there was no girls high school in the area.

The community presented a homogenous picture as a whole with little socio-economic differences. The single road coming from a town was not blacktop where

there was infrequent transportation. The area is too much remote from the capital and hence, People anxiously wait for newspapers to be delivered the next day. In an interview, a student's father who was working as an assistant in a government office, told that a culture of earning through illegal means was in vogue in most of the government departments to keep up with the modern life style. It had never been their concern to deliver services they were paid for. He himself admitted that his duty always revolved around compliance to the wishes of his bosses.

4.2.2. School/Community No. 2

The second school I visited was a Government Girls Higher Secondary School. It had a grand building located in semi-urban area. People were well off economically but having little difference in their life style from those of rural areas. Strangely enough, there was no drinking water facility. There was acute shortage of staff in the school and acting principal who was C.T¹⁰ by designation and had been working as in charge of the school for the last nine months, told me that all of the senior positions were vacant. It had a bad effect upon the strength of the students which was 83 only and many parents had shifted their daughters to a nearby boys school; although co-education was looked down upon, considered contrary to the teachings of Islam and against the norms of Pakhtun culture.

Principal of the school was young with four children under age 7. Her face was veiled like the other teachers, conforming to the cultural value of observing '*Pardha*'¹¹ told me in detail about the school with a tinge of disappointment in her style. Simultaneously, she was also handling her baby while pinpointing the short comings of government policies. The principal and teachers came from the same

¹⁰ In Pakistan, the designation of the teachers in a higher secondary school are categorized as 1) Principal: BPS 18/19, SS: BPS 17, SET: BPS 16/17 and CT: BPS 14. BPS stands for Basic pay scale.

¹¹ *Pardha* is an urdu word for concealing the body by female in front of males outside one's family.

community with the same typical family background of the area. The teachers were more reticent showing modesty. The student respondents from class 8th and class 10th each, hardly gathered to talk and express themselves. The students were not happy with the school's performance. They told that indifference towards female education by their male family members exactly had the impact on the standard of the school too.

In PTC, the chairman and members were selected by male assistant on behalf of the principal. They were young and lacked enthusiasm, though their sisters were studying in the school. The members represented the new generation who were willing to send their daughters/sisters to school yet they did not think seriously of providing quality education. They told that their male elders did not like female education even in such modern times and expecting mothers to deliver on this front was a far cry because most of them were illiterate and had no access to electronic media. Watching television was considered a source of spreading vulgarity that instigated female to unshackle their traditional barriers. Girls were socialized to be obedient house wives; therefore, getting education was secondary for them. In contrast, boys' education was considered important to secure job and earn.

4.2.3 School/Community No. 3

I had to climb a knoll for approaching the third school which was isolated from the population. Although the building was old but properly maintained. The principal was a member of the locality. He was old and Islamic minded person and had been performing as acting principal for the last three years. He appreciated team work of his staff in providing congenial atmosphere for teaching-learning. Overall result of the school was 73% and, two students got A-1 grade in SSC examination last year.

The staff of the school was cooperative and followed the prescribed timetable wholeheartedly. The teachers were young and middle aged and most of them were local. One of the four teachers selected for interview had admitted two of his children in this school: whereas the other three had no child in school because two of them had grown up boys who were studying in a college and the third one had admitted his three children in a private school due to having a better standard. Two student respondents were from 9th and 11th grade. One of these students' fathers was in *Karachi*¹², working as a security guard in a private company and the other student's father was running a small shop in the locality.

The chairman and members of PTC were old and illiterate, always showing gratitude to the principal. They had favorable relationship with the whole community and everyone welcomed them. In general, people of the locality were gentle and less loquacious. Two father representatives were a farmer and a low scale government employee. The farmer was middle aged person and had three male and four female children. His income was .06 million PKR per year which was hardly enough to suffice for their sustenance. His elder son was 16 years old who had left his studies in class 8th and was working now in a hotel. The other two sons were studying in class 8th and 9th. The girls were not admitted in school by the father due to being discouraged by the poor performance of his sons in school. The other sampled father was in his late forties and a government employee with annual income .8 million PKR per year. He had nine children i.e. five male and four female. They all were studying in government schools. The father could not afford to send his children to private schools and, therefore, had no other option of his children's schooling.

¹² *Karachi* is the most populace and industrial city of Pakistan.

4.2.4 School/Community No. 4

The final school/community was situated in the central part of the district where half of the population was lying on plain area and the other half was scattered on mountains. The school building was divided in two sections; high school and higher secondary school. The higher section was newly built. On the opposite of the road, in the center of the local market, a narrow gate was leading to the high school section. It was an old building and patches of repair work were visible on it. A senior teacher had been working as principal for the last three years. He shared different success stories of the school's performance, appreciated the efforts of PTC and the cooperation of staff. Being non-local, he had admitted his children in government school located in his own native area. Most of the teachers and the principal were having salary, from .2 million PKR to .8 million PKR per year, as their only source of income.

I personally experienced grouping among staff in public/private organizations in general and in education department in particular. The presence of two groups in the school authenticated my observation where one group of teachers supported principal and vice versa. The principal had selected like-minded local people as PTC members. One of the teachers from opposite group told me that the principal, supported by a local political elite, was involved in financial corruption while utilizing PTC fund. On the contrary, a teacher from the principal's camp highlighted the positive steps taken by principal like maintenance of class rooms, adding more sections in each class and improving overall results of the students. Two respondents from students belonged to average income families. They were not happy from the staff of the school. One of them told that his elder brother was studying in a private school and he wished to join that school too but his family could not support it.

A primary school teacher who had admitted two children in the school criticized the school's teachers for not performing their duties. His elder son was a student of a college in a city. His meagre income was insufficient to provide education in private school to his other five children (2 male and 3 female). Another father of a student interviewed worked on daily wages. He had 5 male and 6 female children studying in government schools. He also criticized government, and school's staff for their bad performance. He told that even if a poor person's son succeeded in getting degree, which was a hard task in the prevalent deteriorating standard, it would hardly earn him get a job. He was thinking to shift his sons to labor market where they would acquire some skill and would also earn money too for supporting his family.

This brief detail would help readers to understand a specific stance of respondents in its context. As discussed earlier, the four schools/communities were little bit different in their socio-economic backgrounds; yet we see difference of attitude of the people towards school on the basis of institutional performance. In the following paras, views of respondents would be analyzed in the light of established themes in the prevailing conditions.

4.3. Stakeholders' Perception about School Community Relationship

Institutional performance in itself is a motivating factor in community involvement in the school, consistent with Woolcock (2002) synergy model of social capital. It would make things easy in forging networks with the community in multiplying the efforts made for the development of education. Before going to understand the perceptions, apprehensions, capabilities and enthusiasm of the communities in sharing the responsibility of development process with the government, I would first

present the views of principals/administrators and teachers regarding the idea of social capital building because they occupy central position in this network of community and school. The principals and staff evoke reciprocating response from the community due to their services/disservices in schools. This is why the efforts made by the principals and teachers for optimizing the quality of education would also be analyzed.

Now I would proceed to see practically what is the situation in different areas of the district where efforts were made to harness the social capital for the development of education.

4.3.1. (a) Principals' Views about School-Community Link

Shangla, as referred above, is one of the typical traditional rural districts in KP lying away from cross roads and is consisted of mountainous land. Education had been the least priority of the inhabitants in past, resulting into the administrative seats either occupied by non-locals or lying vacant. When I visited four Government Higher Secondary Schools (GHSS) in the district, all of them were run by in-charges (acting principals). These acting principals were local teachers of lower rank. The scarcity of staff in schools in general and those of principals in particular showed apathy of the government in providing better schooling facilities. Shortage of staff is directly proportional to institutional output. A temporary, semi-skilled/unskilled teacher cannot take bold steps as an administrator in developing institutional social capital to attract community for forging ties with schools. Similarly, teaching is a humble job in Pakistan and lower scale teachers like C.T/ Senior English Teachers (S.E.Ts) look towards political elites for finding a short-cut to higher posts like principal. In return, political elites may demand illegal favor from them during election where they work as presiding/polling officers or may ask for concession in duties for certain teachers

being their relatives or having political affiliation with. In reward, the in-charge ensures secured local posting, ease in discharging of duties and a chance of making corruption from little funds available. When I asked the principal of school No. 1 about the issue he said:

“there is shortage of qualified teaching staff in the district and qualified people from other areas do not feel comfortable here because of less facilities available, rural nature of the area and poor means of transportation”.

It was a dilemma throughout the district which, according to most of the administrators, had adverse impact upon teaching-learning process. Government did not give any attention to the problem as hard area allowance was not offered to the teachers in remote areas.

Principals/in-charges of the four sampled GHSS showed very enthusiastic approach in their attitudes towards community involvement in school affairs. They belonged to the localities and knew the parents of all students mostly by name. They had constant contact with them through participation in community gatherings. But they thought that the traditional role of the teacher is not suffice to cater for the growing challenges of institutions. That is why these principals looked forward for strong school community links. Principal of school No. 3 said:

“Today’s world expects a lot from institutions. The staff alone cannot efficiently manage all affairs of growing number of students. Over-crowding of classrooms itself is a major problem that directly challenges principals/administrators to cope with”.

Exploring further, principal of school No. 4 said:

“we experience continuous influx of new students but we have the same staff and infrastructure. It becomes very difficult to multiply institutional progress under such circumstances”.

Growing communication and advancement in social and print media generally has considerable influence upon mass awareness. As most of the poor people of the

district do menial jobs in advanced city of *Karachi*, where they recognize value of education for acquiring well paid jobs and they wish to their children to follow suit. Such fathers are particular about their children's performance in school. Hence, school administration experience considerable pressure from parents' side to concentrate upon their duties as principal of school No. 1 remarked:

“parents are now in better position to understand the importance of children's education. They desire to provide best possible education and want to understand the reason why his child does not carry well in school”.

The growing trend of parent's interest in child's education is a considerable concern for school administrators. Although it may be seen as a stress for school's officials in performing their duties, yet it offers many easy solutions for some of institutional problems as well (These problems are discussed later in this chapter). Parental involvement definitely provides opportunities for better schooling of children and making available social capital of the community to the school as well. School depends upon parents for controlling absentees and drop out ratio. Similarly, individualities of students can best be understood through consistent contact with the parents. In absence of such networks, many undesirable coping strategies might be adopted inside institutions.

Corporal punishment is one such measure contributing to drop out ratio. Most of the teachers rely on stick to silence the inquisitive mind. Understanding individuality of students helps sustaining their interest in school and enhances the quality of education as principal of school No. 4 said:

“overcrowding minimizes the chance of giving individual attention to students; still we need contact with parents of such students who come to school irregularly or become deviants”.

Government of Pakistan vowed to ensure 100% literacy rate, in order to achieve millennium development goals (MDGs), through establishing new schools, increasing enrolment ratio and decreasing dropout rate. This dream could not be achieved without the help of community. This problem persists in those areas where people are poor, less facilities of getting education available and unemployment ratio is high. Such circumstances do not lead the masses to choose education of their children as a rational choice and turns the game in favor of child labor. This is why government needs the support of parents/community in bringing children to school.

Correspondingly, school as an institution does not work in controlled environment/automated structure with pre-determined ways of doing things. It has many issues come its way while running in a locality. It can neither function in isolation, nor can afford to have a solo flight in catering to the desired standards of any community. From provision of basic needs like drinking water, shortage of staff and resources, maintenance of infrastructure to community school conflicts, provision of playing grounds, absentees of students from school etc. are some of the problems where community can play a role for ensuring optimum performance of schools (detail of these problems is given later in this chapter).

4.3.1. (b) Principals' Views about Institutional Goals and its Realization

Education is a dynamic process and it faces different challenges in its routine work. Emerging challenges necessitate involvement of local administration to play its role as per requirements of the local culture. The principals of schools, in this respect, are entrusted to observe changes in teaching-learning process and manage it in the best possible way.

Principals of schools in district *Shangla* were keen to give optimum results to the community. Being members of the same localities, they considered themselves duly responsible for education of children. They told that they are doing all possible efforts to meet the educational needs of the community. They increased the number of sections in each class, although it overburdened the work load of teachers.

Principal of school No. 1 said:

“principally I am supposed to keep balance between workload and performance of my staff but after consultation with my staff, I accommodated three times more students by increasing the number of section from 1 to 3 in each class”.

When I told that it was the responsibility of government to provide more staff for the multiplied number of students, he said:

“I requested the high ups several times for the provision of more staff and other resources but to date could not get it. Me and my staff work like a team in collaboration with PTC and, I think, it is the main reason of our success”.

Principals believed that new techniques are introduced and advanced tools are used in teaching-learning process every day. It becomes very difficult for every individual teacher to excel in all these areas. Some teachers are good in one area whereas other teachers have expertise in other areas. So the whole staff works like a team. When I asked about the changed role of a teacher in modern times where teacher has to strive for meeting personal/family requirements, maintaining a decent status in a society within meagre income as compared to the past homogenous society where teacher held exalted status, revered by all and sundry due to his degree of knowledge and extension of all possible support in sustaining his family. Principal of school No. 4 told in this respect:

“in past, a teacher was master of never changing curriculum. He had fewer students and he knew them all by names. Today, it is not possible: curriculum is changing every year and advanced material is inculcated; secondly, we have hundreds of students in the school and it is not possible to know all the students by name”.

Talking about the changing curriculum, the principals said that it is a good thing. Students can know more by including advance/modern material in the curriculum. It overburdened the responsibilities of a teacher, especially in the absence of refresher courses. Talking about the importance of individuality of students, principal of school No. 3 said:

“more focus is upon child in today’s curriculum; his/her individuality is given more preference and everything revolves around the child. We, the teachers, are only facilitators”.

Parallel to it, parents themselves have realized the importance of their children’s education. However, due to illiteracy, they do not know how to improve the educational process. They still think that school should perform well and very few people understand that school too is a part of community like mosque and *hujra* where everyone could/should contribute (this point is explained further at the end of the chapter).

Principals and teachers, as discussed above, understand the importance of parental involvement in child’s education in such situation for two factors; first, parents can help teachers to understand the individual personality of a child and secondly, teachers can tell parents why his/her child fail in his studies or is weak in some subjects. Principal of school No. 1 explained this as:

“it is utmost important that parents should have contact, at minimum level, with the school because we don’t know much about the psyche of every child and parent can tell us about the idiosyncrasies of his/her child. Even when truancy is observed we write to the parents but fail to get encouraging results”.

The principals admitted the importance of school community link and looked forward for a regular synergy. Nonetheless, there were, according to them, many reasons for this missing link between school and community/parents. They thought that most of the parents were striving for earning livelihood to raise their families.

Low employment opportunities had created frustration in some of the parents who accused school's administration for their child's failure. Principals acknowledged the limitations of parents by saying that although all parents cannot actively participate in school activities; at least they should have responded to the principal's letter. Principal of school No. 3 said:

“this is why government has implemented the policy of establishing PTCs in each school. This council consists of local ‘*mashran*’¹³ of the community and few representatives among parents who help school administration in resolving all problems of the institution. This is a novice idea which will take time to mature but it has helped a lot in shouldering the responsibility of children's education by the community”.

All principals appreciated the efforts of PTCs. They thought that it had positive impact upon teaching–learning process. They further said that PTC members regularly checked the activities of schools and appreciated the gradual improvement.

4.3.1. (c) Principals' Stance on Existence and Structure of PTCs

Principals had been local bureaucrats entrusted with powers inside the boundaries of school. Practice of democracy, giving basic rights to every individual and change in the curriculum from teacher centric to child centric couple with awareness through mass media in Pakistan also changed the status of a principal from a bureaucrat to a team leader. In traditional society, this process is still in transition; hence was considered important to ask principals about this change from autocratic institutional set ups to democratic organizations.

PTCs existed in all schools of district *Shangla*. The principals of boys schools told that PTC meetings were held regularly and the whole process of the council formulation had been carried out transparently. They said that the members of the

¹³ ‘*Mashran*’ is the plural of Pushto word *mashar* which means an elder, elite and chief of a community.

councils were selected by consensus. When asked why did they not hold election, Principal of school No. 3 said:

“I often called all parents to attend the meetings and every time faced a discouraging ratio of parents’ attendance. Even the thin turned out parents were those who did not know essence of the councils. As result, only few but worthy parents were included”.

All of the principals admitted that they did not succeed in establishing working relationships with parents of all students for many reasons. Therefore they had to rely on the few among community elites/fathers for functioning of PTCs with the aim of taking onboard all parents implicitly. The principals and those few community elites/fathers had been working for parental involvement so far with mutual understanding/consensus. It is a fact that literacy rate of district *Shangla* is very low (see table 3.1) and this is why there was a big difference between thinking of a principal and an illiterate father: yet the process of electing members of PTCs might induce a sense of responsibility in the masses. The process can help in realizing empowerment through inclusiveness in decision making process. Defending the selection method of the council’s members, principal of community No. 4 held:

“actually it is not possible to onboard all parents for numerous reasons: one of the grounds is that most of the parents work at day time for earning livelihood and they can’t afford missing their daily wages throughout the week. So we try to engage such persons who may accommodate school activities in their timetables”.

Principals and teachers of the district wanted only those among community to participate who were helpful to them. A principal boldly confessed that they could not allow everybody to interfere in school affairs because majority of the parents were illiterate and they knew nothing about education and its development. Hence, according to the principal, there was fair chance of malpractice of power in decision making process at school. Principal of school No. 3 opined in that:

“I always welcome community/fathers to visit school because we are paid for teaching their children in a better way. The members of PTC can check our performance and may share with us precious comments. But I think the interference of every individual of the community in the school’s affairs can also detract the efforts of the school. They (looking at PTC members with smile on face) may start dictate us for their own selfish motives like politicians. So I mean that community (certain good people) should be involved in school’s affairs to certain extent”.

Chairmen of PTCs were selected by the principals and it is important to pinpoint that although these chairmen belonged to the locality but most of them did not have children in the school. It was against the prescribed criteria where it was written clearly that chairman should be elected by parent members among themselves.

I participated in PTC meetings and minutely observed the inclusiveness of parents in decision making process. Chairmen had been selected by the principals among the local elites called *mashran* who were active members of the concerned communities. By rule, the chairmen were to be selected by the parents among themselves. It was also observed that parents members did not attend PTC meetings. Principals explained the same that parents had apparently divested themselves of the responsibility and entrusting it to the *mashran* of the community (Why principals restricted the structure of PTC to local elites only will be discussed later in the chapter). During the meeting time, I had been going through the documentary record of the councils and was astonished to see that it was poorly maintained. There was no list of all parents containing their names, contact numbers and addresses although all the principals had categorically told that they had been writing to parents every now and then.

Among four Government Higher Secondary Schools’ (GHSS’s) principals, only one principal confidently handed over to me the PTC record without any hesitation. The remaining three were rather reluctant to furnish it. There was much confusion about the members of the council. Although it was written in the PTC guide that the

council will be elected for three years but I observed that there were fewer names of the chairmen in three year duration. Similarly, the signatures of the members on the resolutions passed were dissimilar in different meetings; and one could easily suspect the fake nature of signatures. It simply means that the whole process of establishing PTCs was manipulated to make the high ups assured about the implementation of the policy.

Along with checking the record, I was also listening to the discussions in the meetings. The principals started the meetings, raised the problem conceived earlier and interestingly, extended solutions too. Usually the discussions revolved around the maintenance of infrastructure; how PTC fund was spent and what achievements school's administration had made? The principals guided the whole proceeding of the meetings; they already had decided the agendas of meetings and just put up the would-be utilization of funds in front of the councils. The resolutions were written by the principals reflecting the pre decided plans and were presented to the members for endorsement. The members happily signed the resolutions applauding the role of schools' administration in the development of education.

The members were selected by the principals for less interference and smooth running of the schools' affairs under the umbrella of PTCs. They appreciated efforts of the principals; took tea with biscuits and condemned parents for their non-cooperative behaviors. When asked about the essence of PTC, the members knew nothing about the basic aim of the councils and looked towards principals for giving answer.

I was not shocked at the procedure followed in such meetings because I had read in the introduction of the PTC guide where it was written that main responsibility of

the council is to ensure transparent utilization of PTC fund and monitoring the infrastructural development of schools. Although responsibilities of the council were elaborated in the guide later, yet the foremost function written in the introduction was to ensure proper use of the finances given to a school under the head.

The overall aims and objectives of PTC were comprehensively elaborated in PTC guide (see chapter 2 for detail). Whenever I tried to focus upon those objectives in the meetings, the members started complaining against parents. They told that parents had no time to monitor the timetables of their children at home, leaving aside their coming to school and ask about the performance of their children from principals/teachers. I asked them whether they launched any activities/awareness campaigns; the members lowered their heads giving disapproval. Principals confirmed their disapproval and said that formal campaigns in the communities were not held rather they tried to disseminate such messages through discussions in *hujra* and personal contacts. It was what going on in the boys' schools.

In girls' school, the PTC comprised of male members of families only. The principal told that female mobility is restricted and illiterate mothers knew nothing about school. Both these factors were decisive in formulating PTC that included only male members of the students' families. There was acute shortage of senior teachers which barricaded the way of getting institutional objectives. PTC meeting in the girls school witnessed criticism upon higher authorities. The members told me about the struggles they had made for rehabilitation of the school. Principal of the girls school explained the overall situation in these words:

“I have nothing to offer to the community. We cannot even offer science subjects at Secondary School Certificate (SSC) level because of the shortage of staff. Through the forum of PTC, we passed many resolutions and forwarded to the department for

provision of staff but of no use. The community is poor and it cannot provide finances to engage part time teachers”.

The PTC in girls’ school was just formality and the head of institution admitted its superficial nature. The record was properly maintained and the whole thing was recorded in few pages. There was even lack of network between girls’ schools and EDO’s office.

4.3.1. (d) Principals’ views about Level/Status of School-Community Partnership

In district *Shangla*, Social capital building in the development of education is in its nascent stage and it will take time to mature. As the EDO put it, “Rome was not built in a day”. Parents did not show enthusiasm to participate in PTC meetings and were reluctant to cooperate with the principals. However, the principals and PTC members tried to show determination in crystalizing the objectives of the councils through empowering the local communities to take active part in decision making process in schools. Therefore it is pertinent to present the views principals to understand the existing scope and status of the councils.

PTC guide was designed to help principals in materializing the idea, however it was interesting to note that none of the schools in the district had a copy it. It might have extended some help to principals, members and parents in gripping the essence of these organizations. Furthermore, I observed while interviewing the high ups i.e. EDOs, and Director (School & Literacy) that they stressed upon the optimal use of PTC fund. Even in the PTC guide, more weightage was given to the proper use of finances provided to schools under the head.

Whenever asked about the fruits of the councils, the foremost outcome was presented in the form of improving/maintaining schools’ infrastructure. It ranged

from repairing class rooms, water tanks, boundary walls, white washing of the building, purchase of stationery, computers and its accessories and provision of basic facilities like drinking water. PTC meetings were usually called when the principals needed to get the cheques signed by the chairmen for ongoing projects.

Disagreeing with the argument, principal of school No. 4 presented the issue of parental/community involvement in these words:

“I always tell the council to thoroughly check our performance. We may not know our mistakes/shortcomings; they can better inform us and can pinpoint our weak areas to improve”.

I was told that, schools remained under a thorough vigilance of community. The problems are being discussed in PTC meetings for all possible solutions. At the same time, school administrators also hand over certain tasks to these members. Usually they are requested to contact the parents of those students who do not come to schools regularly. They are also requested to campaign for increasing enrolment ratio.

The top most output of PTCs emerged in the shape of a forum that helped in resolving conflicts cropped up with the community. There was a serious issue of school No. 4 with the community on erection of boundary wall and PTC members solved the issue through mutual consultation. Similarly, drinking water was supplied to school No. 1 through physical and financial support of the community. In this way, contributions had been made to institutions with its strength limited to the members of PTC; however, its extension to the whole locality for achieving its objectives was still anticipated.

4.3.1. (e) Principal Views on Role of PTCs in Development of Education

Communication between an institution and community is pre-requisite for both synergy view of social capital building and Epstein's model of parental involvement. The level of communication, as discussed above, was limited to local elites called '*mashran*' in district *Shangla*. The degree of reciprocity in these networks turns into emergence of volunteerism in community that leads to fulfilment of remaining four types of Epstein's parental involvement. From communication to volunteerism, there is a process of trust building; and it requires effective strategies both for institutional view of social capital building and determination to establish network with the community.

The idea behind the synergy view of social capital building is that government must perform through obtaining optimum objectives by the institutions. In this way, the institutions will succeed in getting response from the community and, in turn, it will extend volunteerism to help the government in accelerating the process of development. Therefore, I will first present the data on institutional performance followed by nature of networks and volunteerism based upon trust.

District *Shangla*, as referred above, lies in remote northern regions of the province and away from center of power i.e. capital. It is one of the reasons that this area got less attention in the promotion of institutions. Most of the schools suffered shortage of staff; the posts were lying vacant or filled temporarily by junior teachers. Similarly, basic facilities like class rooms, washrooms, playgrounds, drinking water, equipment and AV aids were either insufficient or were in deplorable condition. In such circumstances, the principals had to cope with new challenges like increasing

influx of new students, teaching of advanced /modern curriculum and undergoing new experiences of sharing the institutional responsibilities with communities.

Most of the principals complained of lesser staff and fewer classrooms. They had contacted higher authorities and local political leaders for resolving the above mentioned problems. In PTC meetings, the members told that they had passed many resolutions and forwarded to the EDO but they had yet to receive any affirmative response. In such conditions, the PTC fund was taken for granted and it was utilized for maximum output. When I visited girls' school, there was acute shortage of staff despite having a splendid building. The principal told that there were only few junior teachers. The principal and PTC members had strived their best to acquire teaching staff but in vain.

This is one aspect of the reality and it seems that government failed to achieve institutional goals and objectives. Principals looked complaining against the high ups for not providing the basic facilities whereas the EDO and Director were not happy, in some cases, from principals for their politicized administration. The administrators tried to defend the policies and its mode of implementation but at the end of the day, they too criticized local communities/parents, teachers, principals for non-cooperative behavior and even showed disapproval of the uncalled interference in the affairs of education department by the local political leaders. The director told:

“school could not get the status of communal belonging like mosque and hujra; principals and teachers, not all of them, perform the stereo-typed roles and never think about innovations. The political leaders expect us do things for them even if it is against meritocracy. But it does not mean that we are doing nothing; we have to go miles ahead”.

All of the above facts show the deficit of trust between/among different stake holders. The principals selected those elements from the community who were worth

regarded for positive contributions to the schools. Highlighting the deficit of trust, principal of school No. 4 said:

“there is difference in mind sets of us and parents. They do not know what school expects from them. Slowly and gradually they learn things and I fear they might not use PTC as a tool for politicizing the school environment for personal motives”.

This statement endorses my observation noted in PTC meetings where principals drove the whole process. The actual decision making had already been done by the principals and the members were expected to countersign the would-be plan of action.

The administrator, principals and PTC members lauded the idea of the council for ensuring the transparent use of fund where local ‘*mashran*’ volunteered in providing some help to the institutions. This volunteerism contributed in controlling dropout rate and increasing enrolment.

Most of the teachers did not observe any breakthrough in making the teaching-learning process as a reciprocal activity. They simply argued that most of the parents were reluctant to come to schools. However, a slight but gradual improvement was reported by some teachers. Principals of school No. 1, 3 and 4 also told that parents were showing some interest in their children’s education due to the efforts of PTCs.

4.3.2. Executive District Officer (EDO) Views about the Functioning of PTCs

The EDO of district *Shangla* was an energetic senior person belonging to other than the district under study. He was living in a room attached to his office and used to sit till late for accomplishing his office work. His all four children (2 boys and 2 girls) were studying in private colleges/schools because he could, like many others, afford the expenses of private schools/colleges. Further, he was dissatisfied with the

standard of education in government schools and he criticized the high ups/policy makers/politicians for destroying institutions in general and education department in particular. There was a tinge of pessimism in the views of principals and EDO regarding the parental involvement in district *Shangla*. The EDO talked about the endeavors he had made to involve parents in the affairs of their children's school. Defending the less progress made by the administrators in involving community, he said:

“it is our bad luck that we teach those students whose parents have produced 8 to 10 children by mistake. Now their parents are in search of earning food for them. They find no time to attend their school and ask about the performance of their children”.

He further told that he had attended many functions of parent's days where EDO, Director and even Minister of Education were present but most of the parents were conspicuous by their absence. One of the implicit objectives of PTC, according to the EDO, was to enhance the social status of parents as equal partners of school but acute poverty did not let them think seriously about the education of their children.

When I recalled that it was obligatory for him to attend every PTC meeting in each school; he told that it was impossible for him because of his exhaustive office work. Rather like the fathers who were round the clock busy in earning livelihood, the EDO had to do a lot office work. He further told that once he was asked in a meeting that how he could rehabilitate/innovate the education system, he replied:

“give me money and I will do it. If you cannot afford enough budget allocation for education then give me your (top bureaucrats) children. Because we deal with parents who do not have stake in the community and those who have stake had migrated to cities or abroad”.

I felt a tad of pessimism in conversation with the EDO, still he looked hopeful about steps taken by the principals in attracting community. He was also satisfied with the efforts of these principals, except few, who were determined in forging positive links

between school and community. He supported his hope by quoting a maxim: “Rome was not built in a day”.

4.3.3. Teachers’ Views about School-Community links

Teachers are directly involved in teaching-learning process. They have dual responsibility i.e. they are responsible to administrators for producing better results and parents of the students too expect that teachers would definitely give individual attention to their children. In district *Shangla* where majority of parents were illiterate; they expected teachers to perform their traditional role. But today, teachers have their own problems. As a teacher of school No. 3 said:

“I have many roles to perform. Growing needs and availability of facilities put everyone in competitive position. Priorities of the teachers are not changed, it may be divided”.

The point here is that a teacher faces different challenges both inside and outside the school. In former case, there is increasing influx of the students and new/advanced curriculum is introduced almost every year. A teacher prepares lessons before coming to school to satisfy the rising quest of today’s students. At the same time he has to balance work/life stresses. Talking about the change in institutional environment, a teacher of school No. 1 told:

“ideal class room consists of 25 to 30 students but we have accommodated at least 60 to 70 students in 2/ 3 sections of each class. This overburdens teachers and multiplicity of sections definitely affects individual attention needed to each student”.

The discussion shows that teachers alone cannot afford to cope with the changed circumstances. The government commitment in prioritizing education is evident from allocation of annual budget for education which was 2% of total budget in financial year 2013 (Annual budget report 2013-2014). So the teachers concentrated upon the alternative; to rectify the numerous problems through communal efforts.

Community and parents can help a great deal if they communicate with the school. “Usually students play tricks with both parents and teachers in the absence of home-school coordination; as getting education has never been a joyful enterprise for neglected children” commented a teacher. A teacher of school No. 1 welcomed the idea of community involvement in school affairs in the following words:

“parental involvement in school affairs is a better idea. It will help us in knowing individual idiosyncrasies as parents know their children well. At the same time, it would make parents responsible. They will ask their children to do homework. In this way regularity of the students would be guaranteed and better teaching learning environment will emerge”.

Apart from particular interest of parents, community itself offers of general wisdom and experiences which can contribute in adopting better strategies for optimum results. This is why the policy makers included a local elite and a retired teacher of a community in every PTC. Such people, in the light of their past experiences in response to the emerging challenges, can help in adopting strategies concurrent with the local culture. As a teacher of school No. 4 said:

“educated and skilled persons can help us in identifying weak areas of our teaching-learning process. Even we face a shortage of staff; community can join our efforts voluntarily. They can exchange ideas about different techniques which can maximize our efforts in better schooling”.

Most of the teachers approved the idea of school community links that contribute positively in creating congenial environment of learning for students. But few of the teachers also cautioned about the misconception of the idea, as stated earlier by principal of school No. 3, that some elements of the community can also use it for undesirable meddling. There is a need to properly disseminate awareness among the masses, especially the parents about benefits of this link.

4.3.4. (a) Parents' Perceptions about School-Community Links

Parent stand at the other corner of our network (see diagram 3.1) where they believe on division of labor and solely hold schools responsible for better schooling of their children. It is a typical thinking in rural and illiterate communities that teachers are to devote themselves for the cause of children's education as they are paid for it by the government. Change and growth in positive direction occur very slowly against such deep rooted beliefs. Institutional and community perceptual conflict in roles prevailing for years does not let so easily to understand that teaching-learning is not one way process, rather most of the time it is a reciprocal activity. District *Shangla* typically represents such thinking discussed above.

When I conducted individual interviews with the fathers/guardians of students, they were not sure whether they could play any productive role in the affairs of their children's school: although some of them admitted that school alone could not succeed in achieving its goals without the help of parents. Still some parents held that why should they go to school and considered it as the responsibility of government to provide every facility to school. Justifying his detachment from his child's school, a father from community No. 1, who was working as an assistant in a government office, told:

“education of children is our common responsibility: as I work all day long to provide basic needs of the family. This is why I could not manage to go to school and ask about my child's status of education”.

It is a genuine reason that parents first struggle for bare existence and concentrate upon attaining resources which help in earning livelihood. It is not a bad idea but dilemma starts when lower income retards one's ability to think optimistically. Few of the parents complained against education department in general and school's staff

in particular for their inefficiency. Whereas other parents were not sure if they could extend any help to school in improving its performance. A father from community No. 3 told:

“I know nothing about education: teachers are learned people and know better how to teach provided they wish to perform their duties”.

Being a researcher, I noted in the field that some fathers desired to educate their children in the best possible way. They acknowledged that parents can help their children by making them do their homework and check their regularity. However, most of them were hesitant to communicate with the school. They were not sure if they could contribute anything in joining school activities. They thought that teachers are best equipped to perform their role independently.

4.3.4. (b) Parents’ Views about Functioning of PTCs

I observed a partial/selective interest of principals on parental involvement in school affairs: sometimes they complained about the non-seriousness of parents whereas on other side, the principals were apprehensive that participation of parents might not affect the smooth running of schools’ affairs. They said that it looked unwise to invite those parents/community members who had no vision, skills and zeal to promote the cause of education. Therefore, it was considered appropriate to ask from parents about the space provided to them in actual decision making process.

The views of parents, whose children were studying in the targeted four schools, regarding the functioning of PTC can be divided into three groups in the district:

The first group of parents supported the existence and functioning of the councils. They had some type of connection with the school i.e. either they were directly linked through a family member who had been an employee in the school or they

had indirect relationship in the shape of friends in schools' staff. Although they did not know much about the ongoing activities in the schools, yet they said that something positive has been observed over a period of time. A father from community No. 4 who was strong supporter of a local political elite portrayed the efficiency of principal in the following words:

“school's administration tries its best to impart best possible education in consultation with the community. The deficiencies of school are not due to the negligence of staff; rather there is insufficient staff and resources”.

(It should be kept in mind that the principal and the father both shared affiliation with the political leader)

Parents supported the institutional efforts and condemned the high ups for ignoring the ever increasing needs of the schools as some of the principals also held the same stance.

Second group of parents looked unconcerned altogether. They concentrated on fulfilling the economic needs of the family. Majority of the fathers across the four communities belonged to this group. This was the lower strata of community characterized by meagre/insufficient income, living in mud/semi-cemented houses with average 8 children per person. They (fathers) found no time to think about providing quality education to their children and looked worried even about providing basic facilities to them. They had no access to power structure directly or indirectly through local elites. Their only link with the government was based upon hearsay information, hence they considered education of their children as responsibility of teachers and if the later did not perform their duties, no one can instill the sense of responsibility in them. They urged upon government and political

leaders to monitor schools and provide the required facilities. One such father from community No. 1, who was working on daily wages, told:

“my three children left school before completing secondary school certificate and they help me by working in a local hotel whereas the younger one is studying in class 6th or 7th, I am not sure. I don’t know what is going on in the school and I wonder getting high school education which is although accessible, can be of any help in finding a government/private job”.

The third group of fathers was more critical of the administrators. They told that they never received any letter from principals to attend any meeting. PTCs were regarded as means of corruption; principals nominated those people in the council who supported their illegal activities and, in this way, a meagre amount of fund was utilized while the major chunk went into the pockets of principals. Similarly, one of the fathers told that teachers of government schools merely come to the institution for attendance and then leave for teaching in private schools/academies. One of the fathers, a primary school teacher (PST) in community No. 4, revealed helplessness of parents as under:

“we can do nothing in resolving the issue because the staff of the school is not accountable to us. These principals have favorable relations with political leaders and higher authorities; they have a political support and I think that government, if it wishes, can monitor the activities in best possible way”.

Parents also said that they could not counter the status quo because the principals and teachers were in close nexus with many members of the community who would not digest if the parents objected to the negligence’s of the teachers/principals. In other words, parents feared the loss of their social capital in case of complaining against the schools. Being a part of the same culture for the last thirty years, I have noticed that even if someone secretly lodges a complaint against a public office holder of a higher rank, the authorities disclose the name of the complainant thus inviting wrath of the latter: if someone dares do so openly, the accused punishes

him/her by using all means. We may say that there exists a social contract among such corrupt officials for mutually safeguarding their unlawful activities. So parents/fathers of all three groups had their own individual stances. But one thing was common that none of them had actively communicated with the school.

4.3.5. (a) PTC Members' Views about School-Community Link

Generally, in centralized government system, public institutions are run through a vertical chain of command from top to bottom. Before the advent of modern age, such institutions were relegated a sacred status. In response, the illiterate communities accepted the imposed bifurcation of public and private institutions, told chairman of PTC in school No. 4 who was a retired teacher. Government institutions were considered alien to the local culture and many people even today do not consider it unlawful to encroach upon public belongings for personal benefits. Now, with the establishment of PTCs, the situation is changing. In district *Shangla* where local body members and parents were illiterate, yet they were supporting the schools in many respects. When asked about the need of linking school and community, PTC members enumerated on finger tips the positive points of the councils. Chairman of PTC in school No. 3 who was old and illiterate *mashar* of the community, held:

“it is a common sense that teachers teach our children; if they face problem and we do not help them, our children will suffer consequently. Our school is progressing day by day and we will never let our principal down in any situation”.

Almost all members of PTCs showed enthusiasm in sharing the responsibility of educating their children with school administration. Chairman of PTC in school No.1 who was also ‘*mashar*’ of the community, said:

“I have told the principal that we are at your beck and call. School is a part of our community and we will try our best to facilitate the institution and cooperate with the staff”.

The persons showed a positive concern over the issue and a determination was reflected in their way of talking although they had scant knowledge about their responsibilities and status of being a member of PTC.

4.3.5. (b) PTC Chairmen's/Members' Views about the Functioning of PTC

PTC members in district *Shangla* were selected by principals on the basis of their vision and interpersonal skills which were considered important for the institution. It was also observed that most of the members' children were not studying in the school. They were members of the community called '*mashran*'. They had stereotyped attitude towards the essence and functioning of PTCs. They had never tried to take any bold enterprise; rather they just followed what principals told them.

As discussed earlier in this chapter, it was inculcated in the mind of PTC members that their foremost duty was to ensure judicious use of the funds in infrastructural development. A member of PTC in school No. 3 told:

“we come to school whenever asked by the principal. We don't know needs of the institution, therefore the principal tells us about the plan of action and we do what we can. We supervise the ongoing projects and check its standard”.

Besides following the directions of principals inside schools, the members also project the good intentions of schools' officials and prevail upon parents and community to communicate with the institutions. In other words, PTC members extend social support, both inside and outside, to schools.

On the other hand, mothers of the students were illiterate and most of the fathers were away from homes. Parallel to it, the provision of congenial environment for education at home had never been the top priority because of poverty. However,

some parents who were members of PTCs, said that a fair competition had started among students for getting higher grades in examinations. One such father in community No. 3 told:

“a class mate of my child qualified for taking admission in medical college who studied in the same school and my child failed in that exam. I asked him that the successful guy studied in the same class and the same teachers taught him the same curriculum, then why you failed! He got the point and vowed to take keen interest in his studies”.

These comments show that parents did not know how to regulate their children in their studies. Instead of taking practical steps for educational process, contact with the school enabled fathers only to argue with their children for better performance. The communities were far off from sharing better parenting styles in PTC meetings/regular contact. Not only parents, the PTC members too could not initiate steps to help families in developing fruitful strategies for better schooling of their children. They (members) only extended social and physical help to the institutions only. It would have accelerated the process of development if principals could have included the whole community in the affairs of schools.

Students in the locality were more concerned with fulfilling the routine requirements of the families than their study. Although some students said that they had been doing their homework in time because of pressure from fathers/guardians in response to complaints from our teachers.

4.3.6. Students Perceptions about School-Community Link

All of these agencies from government to school and community focus upon students to enhance human skills through education. Therefore, if any step is taken towards development of education then its benefits must be realized by students themselves. It may range from abandonment of corporal punishment, provision of

healthy environment in schools, catering to individual peculiarities to conducive environment at homes. Such factors carry strong impact upon drop out ratio and helps meeting the challenges of MDGs as established in chapter 2.

Similarly, generation gap between a father and a child makes a student more vulnerable and he/she might detract him/her from the desired way of getting education. It was/is a norm of *pakhtun* culture that even a father should keep distance from his wife and children in front of other family members. Although the situation is changing yet in rural areas, a generation gap still exists between a child and father. While visiting communities for collecting data from fathers and students in district *Shangla*, I observed that those children who were accompanied by their fathers/guardians in '*hujra*'¹⁴ were happy with the idea of school home link. Such students asserted boldly that their teachers took pains to make them understand. One such student from community No. 1, whose brother was educated, local *mashar* and active member of PTC, said:

“I have no option except to concentrate on my studies. If I do not do my homework or break any norm in school, my brother receives the message of mishap before I reach home. This is why I try to follow timetable and my teachers appreciate me in front of the class”.

Apart from children's nature to play most of the time, there were also some problems that hindered students' regularity in school. Highlighting one such problem, a student from school No. 4 told:

“I do have to perform different tasks like fetching wood and bringing water and daily routine items from store; as I am the elder to my brothers. My father has been out of station for earning livelihood; still I manage to do my homework because my uncle snubs me if he receives any complaint from my school”.

¹⁴ '*Hujra*' is an urdu word and it is place where people of the community sit together and discuss different issues. It consists of large size of building used as a common property in wedding and deaths ceremonies.

Some students, whose fathers/guardians were out of station or irresponsible, were not interested to talk about the issue under discussion. Such students blamed teachers for treating them with indifference. They showed little interest in their studies and even said that it was not easy to get job even if they got higher education. They thought it useless to get education because it would not entitle them to get job in the prevailing corrupt culture.

This was how different stake holders viewed the school community link. Some of them appreciated it; others did not know much about it and very few were still reluctant to approve the synergy between private and public partnership.

4.4. Conclusion

All the stake holders welcomed the idea of PTC in district *Shangla* for better teaching-learning process and considered it in line with the challenging demands of the modern world. The principals/administrators applied the concept of parental involvement with subjective approach of including a small fraction of community elites. The activities of the council were restricted to the beneficial use of PTC funds for maintaining physical infrastructure and provision of basic facilities. The institutions could not attract the poor, illiterate and unaware parents through rendering marvelous results because of insufficient resources, political interference and lack of commitment from concerned bureaucrats. PTC had demonstrated a marginal output by initiating a competition among students to excel in their studies. The administrators/principals in the district correlated the success of PTC with eradicating poverty, increasing literacy and awareness in parents. The current framework would be applied in district *Karak* in the next chapter where the above indicators are comparatively in better position.

5.1. Introduction

In chapter 4, district *Shangla* was presented as a case study focussing on highlighting the idiosyncrasy of traditional rural area. Efforts were made to draw out a compact picture of the locality for explicit reason of contrasting intra/inter communities regarding the issue under consideration. While in this chapter, the issue is probed in somewhat different areas of the same *Pakhtun* culture. Introduction of each school/community illustrates their peculiar characteristics followed by views and concerns of individuals about school and community link. Along with depicting the actual stance of the respondents, efforts are also made to unearth the underlying deep rooted factors behind it. The reader(s) will observe a distinct difference of attitude in the views of respondents. Further, the case study will also prompt reader(s) to examine the practicability of PTC in a variety of settings.

5.2. Communities/Schools in District *Karak*

District *Karak* lies in the south region of *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa* (Henceforth KP) lying on the centre of highway between *Peshawar* and *D.I.Khan*. Its weather is hot and damp, where most of the landscape is mountainous as well as sandy. There is no proper irrigation system and patches of fertile land is cultivated that solely depends upon the frequency and quantity of rains for produce; however, installation of tube wells for irrigation has recently been started. Similarly, there are no industries in the area, though some minerals are under exploration/explored like salt, gypsum, plutonium, oil and gas.

Population of the district is 430796, scattered in 3372 square kilometres area (DCR, 1998). It is noteworthy that *Karak* is the single district of Pakistan, where only one tribe i.e., *Khattak*¹⁵, resides. It is one of the districts with high literacy rate (see table 3.1). Education is the major source, used for earning livelihood by securing jobs in different fields. There are two major social classes i.e., middle and lower. Most of the people work in government/private organizations, throughout the country and maintain their budget within their salaries. The choice of school for one's children depends upon his/her income. It is observed that sometimes people even borrow money/sell property for the education of their children.

Apart from government schools, there is a trend of establishing private schools in almost every locality. Many of them carry good reputation. People from other districts especially the remote areas of Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA) have admitted their children in these schools where boarding facility is provided to them. The trend of launching private schools started in response to growing population and an alternate to poorly performing government schools. Nowadays, these have become profitable businesses least interested in catering for better teaching-learning environment. Apart from these private educational institutions, intelligent students and those who can afford on self-finance basis also succeed in getting admissions in reputable institutions in the big cities of Pakistan. These facts reflect the outlook and vision of the people showing commitment in educating their new generation. The trend is reinforced by steps taken by many government schools to compete with private schools. It is true that most of the poor admit their children in government schools but they too are equally aware about their rights and do not

¹⁵ *Khattaks* are the predecessors of *Khushal Khan Khattak*, a great Pashto poet, a philosopher and a warrior.

hesitate to lodge complaint against anyone in public office. The obvious reason of the social consciousness appears to be the absence of '*khanism*'¹⁶ in the district. Every person considers himself an equal citizen, sharing equal rights. Unlike other areas of Pakistan, Political parties could not penetrate and perpetuate their influence through supporting few influential families.

Of late, the individual empowerment has offered a congenial environment for female education. Various government and private schools have been established for girls in most of the localities. The observance of cultural traditions is a bit relaxed in the district as compared to *Shangla*. Still women employment is restricted to teaching and health. In most of the area women take active part in elections, although they cast vote as per dictates of their male family members. In most of the area, the hujra system is disappearing and every family has its own building for public gatherings like marriage ceremonies and funeral processions i.e. the collective communal hujra has been replaced by individual drawing rooms.

Being native of the district, I know the difference of attitudes in these people more minutely. So I discussed the issue of visiting four schools (including 3 boy's and a girl's school) in the district with EDO (Education district officer) and I selected four communities/schools in consultation with him in order to obtain rich and multidimensional data regarding school-community links.

5.2.1. Community/School No. 1

The first school was situated in rural setting on South-west of the district. The school building was giving a magnificent look being recently whitewashed. I observed a strict discipline among students and staff exhibiting modest formalities. A man on

¹⁶ *Khanism* is a Pushto word used for feudal system.

main gate kept me waiting for getting permission from principle and it took me 30 minutes to enter the principal's office. The principal was a bearded man in his early fifties. It was the principal with whom I had worked for three years in another institution. He was a religious minded person and never compromised upon principles. He belonged to a nearby locality at a little distance from the community. He had 7 children (3 male and 4 female) and all of them studied in a local government school.

Most of the teachers came from the surroundings except 3 of them, who were from the community. One of the three local teachers was in his mid-forties. He had 3 sons and 2 daughters. The three elder children were studying in the same school. The other selected teacher for interview was a young teacher who had one school going son among 3 children. He had admitted his son in local private primary school and told that he will shift his son to his school after getting primary education in that private school. Both of the teachers had an average income of .4 million PKR per year. Almost all students shared the same family background with average income. They were happy with the standard of their education.

The people of the locality were acknowledged for their wisdom. The principal told me that the inhabitants had expertise in understanding psyche of a person and used to deal with people accordingly. He further appreciated the seriousness of *Masharan* (community elders)/ PTC members and endorsed their cooperation in managing school affairs. Almost every father showed regard for the principal more than the school. One such father, a retired x-ray technician, termed it their good luck that they had a competent principal. He shifted his son from a private school to government school when he observed the systematic running/working of the local government

school. Another father, who was a farmer, was very passionate in positively highlighting the character of the principal. He told that he could not afford to send his children to private school; therefore the transfer of the principal to their school was blessing in disguise. He was satisfied with the education of his two young children in the school.

5.2.2. Community/School No. 2

The second school selected was in *Karak* city. It is not a large city with big markets, yet it is demarcated as urban in (DCR, 1998). Like all higher secondary schools in district, its building too was double storey unlike school buildings in district *Shangla*. Principal of the school was a smart person in his late forties accompanied by vice-principal of nearly the same age. Total strength of the school was 750 and recently they had started English medium classes on their own (It may be noted that government schools are Urdu medium throughout Pakistan). The school building was properly maintained and more attention was given to the outward look. Principal was living at a 30 minutes' drive from the school and he used his personal car for transportation. He had 6 children and had admitted the elder four in local private school.

Teachers of the school belonged to the same district but were from various localities. Most of them relied upon their salaries for overall income. One of the non-local teachers had admitted his children in Islamic/religious school called *Madrassah*¹⁷. A local teacher told that he had admitted all his sons/nephews in this school. The teachers maintained that they were satisfied with the standard of education in their

¹⁷ *Madrassah* is an urdu word used for Islamic educational institution.

school and criticized some parents for not paying attention to the undesirable activities of their children.

The locality was divided in many groups where each of them considered itself superior to others. Most of the fathers were doing small scale businesses in the local market and some of them were employed in government/private organizations. As a whole, most of them shared the same living standard. A father, who was running a small shop, told me that if his son did not get education he would be destined run a small business like him. The respondent was in his forties and had quitted education before completing high school. The second father was retired from army and was working in a private organization. He was more hopeful about the success of his children in the school.

5.2.3. Community/School No. 3

The Government Girls Higher Secondary School (GGHSS) was situated in the northern corner of the district. The area was like a town and little land was available for cultivation. The school was located in the midst of the populous part of the community. The principal was recently transferred to the school. Although she belonged to district *Karak* but she could not speak the native language fluently because her brought up was made in Urdu speaking city of *Lahore* (capital city of Punjab Province). She had a daughter and her husband was a teacher in boys' school. They lived in a rented house near girls school.

The principal looked committed and had formed different committees of teachers for different activities. Many posts of senior teachers were lying vacant; still result of the school was 100% in the preceding SSC (Secondary School Certificate) examinations including two students securing A grade. Total strength of the students

was 400. Generally, principal is held responsible for smooth running of a school and effectiveness of teaching-learning depends upon his determination, regularity and style of administration in Pakistan. I observed that girls' schools in KP, experienced shortage of teachers and posts of principals were either lying vacant or the principals belonged to far flung area of the province. In such circumstances, the teachers gave less heed to their duties as reflected by the maxim "when the cat is away, the mice will play". This was why teachers of the school looked disoriented because the principal was strict and she did not compromise upon any deficiency in work.

The locality was a centre of power and charm till late 70s. After that, it gradually lost its importance; however, people maintained their priority regarding women's education. Most of the mothers were not highly educated but inclusion of women in PTC reflected the broad mentality of the community. The PTC members appreciated the contributions of male family members who had extended all possible help for the improvement of the school. The students too were confident and forth coming while talking with me on school-community relationship. As a whole, the community gave an egalitarian outlook.

5.2.4. Community/School No. 4

The fourth school I visited in district *Karak* was the one where I had worked for ten years. The locality was rural in background and there was enough land for cultivation. The inhabitants were mix of educated, less educated and illiterate people. There were some elements who were drug addicts and at times would factor for the internecine feuds. Strength of the students was 300 and 48% of them failed in Secondary School Certificate (SSC). When I was interviewing PTC members, they

always targeted principal for making corruption in utilising PTC funds. The members focused upon the issue throughout the discussion.

The principal of the school was middle aged man with strong physique. He had 6 daughters and a son. He did not carry good administrative repute. He was supported by a group of local teachers who connived to form a fake PTC last year. It helped him to make corruption in PTC funds. The fathers applauded the positive role played by non-local teachers. In contrary, they considered the group of local teachers as ‘mafia’, who were always busy to make the newly appointed principal corrupt with the obvious purpose of compromising on duties. Most of the local teachers’ children were studying in private institutions. The students I interviewed belonged to poor families and had no choice to take admission in private schools.

The community expressed displeasure over the performance of the school’s administration. Those who could afford had taken their children to private schools. Parents condemned political leaders for the malfunctioning of the institution. They said that corrupt principals are supported by one political leader or another. Therefore, they considered it useless to lodge complaint against the administrator.

I hope giving the cultural/social background information of the sampled schools/communities of the district will help reader(s) to understand the issue in contextual terms.

5.3. Stakeholders’ Perception about School-Community Relationship

Success of any development policy depends upon its suitability to local culture. Targeting an issue is not enough; apprehensions and concerns of the local actors should also be addressed for quite some time to mature the idea. In the current

district; most of the principals/administrators, teachers, students and parents/community members welcomed the establishments of PTCs. However, majority of them did not see any prospects of the envisaged synergy between school and community for many reasons i.e., PTCs are being manipulated and run by principals as per their selfish interest, poor institutional performance, and little attention paid by parents to their children's education. However, a gradual interest of the parents in the affairs of their children's school was also observed in community/school No. 1, No. 3 and to some extent in No.2. In the preceding paragraphs, the different dimensions of the issue will be analysed reflected in the discussion of all the stakeholders. First, the views of principals/administrators will be presented as they are the implementers of the policy.

5.3.1. a) Principals' Views About School-Community Link

Unlike district *Shangla*, principals of schools in district *Karak* were commissioned officers and almost all of them belonged to the local communities. They were in better position to understand institutional norms and socio-cultural barriers in the development of education. Most of the schools did not face shortage of teaching staff that provided an impetus for better institutional performance. Moreover, people of the district had improved socio-economic conditions and easy access to information and power structure. This is why no political party succeeded in getting consistent political support. Whenever the public/community wished to change the political scenario; they used their votes for a desired change.

However, it looks that schools face different social problems too, which, apart from low budgetary provisions from government, eventually check the accomplishment of Millennium Development Goal (MDG's). These include the issues operating among

the three poles i.e. teachers, students and parents/community (see diagram 2.1). As a result, most of the principals accepted the importance of community involvement in their children's education.

Almost all the principals stressed the masses should realize the importance of education and support the government's efforts, because schools are the primary agents in overall process of development. The dichotomy between private and public institutions and considering the public as an 'alien bodies' establishes the hegemony of private. Hence, in the prevailing circumstances, the corrupt government officials and incognizance of public towards public institutions equally contribute destroying developmental measures. Making corruption by officials/officers in government department on one hand and senselessness of the people on the other hand, all the plans of development have led astray. Talking about the lack of awareness and the senselessness of the people, principal of school No. 2 said:

“parents/community think that since government schools offer free education therefore, they suffer from poor quality of education. They do not know that state pays PKR 800/- per month per student from their money collected through taxes. They should understand the reality. We can take many steps in improving the quality of education through their views/reviews and suggestions”.

It was observed that many heads of schools showed disappointment while talking about the attitude of the community/ parents. Their views clearly reflected a gap between the parents and institutions. Whenever they talked about the contributions of community, it was based upon the working relationship via PTC members. At the same time, they were happy with the would-be benefits of PTCs in cooperation with the school in taking different measures. Principal of school No. 3 who was newly transferred to the school enumerated many problems; like low voltage, vulnerable condition of the building and problems related to students' academics which could be positively addressed with the help of community/parents. Similarly, principal of

school No. 3 and 4 criticised parents for ignoring the importance of their children. In this way, the principals approved the need and complementary role of parents/community, especially taking on the spot/timely decisions with the changing needs.

5.3.1. b) Principals Perceptions about Institutional View of Social capital and Its Realization

In the process of development in developed countries, education –the agent of change– has undergone many phases of change itself. The state of school has changed from autocratic to teamwork, giving attention to individual child in thorough consultation with community and parents. It looks a linear model from perspective of policy makers but on ground, it involves a series of long established traditional norms. Principals in the district acknowledged the private and public dichotomy. They believed that government has taken many initiatives to improve the standard of education. Emphasis is put on the importance of a child and the growth of his/her potential and regarded it as the primary objective of a school. In this regard, importance of co-curricular activities too is recognised by the policy makers in this regard too. However, the principals faced many problems to act in line with the policy which had a negative impact upon school-community bonding. They admitted that they could not succeed in bridging the gap between the two. However, each principal narrated a story containing a series of steps taken to gain the trust of communities.

Principal of school No. 1, who was a religious minded person in his late fifties, displayed his belief in team work through establishing different committees for different accomplishments. He appreciated the team work of his staff. I personally observed strict discipline, clean environment, ventilated classrooms and

Uninterrupted Power Supply (UPS) installed in school. It was the first school in my field do far, which reflected determination towards development of education. Principal of school No. 2, 3 and 4 asserted that they could succeed in attaining the favour of community through better institutional performance. However, the existing patterns hindered the efforts of administrators. As Principal of school No. 2 told that political interference, the non-professional attitude of teachers and incognisance of parents discourage their vision. In such discouraging conditions, some efforts were visible to achieve development goals and objectives in education.

The institutions are deemed to flourish trust between school and community for mutual support and it could be sustained through keeping a vigilant eye on mutual needs continuously. In this regard, principal of school No. 2 told that he had started English medium sections in each class on the demand of parents (it should be noted that medium of instruction is Urdu in government schools throughout the country). It is a step to compete with private schools because English medium of instruction is considered a mark of quality education in Pakistan. Similarly, principal of school No. 1 exhibited his willpower to maximise institutional performance and told that he started separate girls section in each class to meet the community needs in line with the local culture. I generally observed that in some areas of the district either girls high school did not exist or parents were not satisfied with the poor performance of the female teachers. Consequently, they encroached upon cultural norm of male-female dichotomy and resorted to get their daughters enrolled in boys' school due to the obvious reason of comparatively better teaching-learning conditions than found in girls schools.

At the same time, most of the principals urged parents to keep vigilance on their children. They told that children often leave their homes in school uniform but resort to truancy. Hence, principals of all male schools introduced fine on absentees without prior permissions from high-ups. Although, they admitted, it was not a better solution for the problem, yet it helped in ensuring students' attendance to some extent. There were two reasons of students' short attendance; first was the negligence of parents who could not find time to address psychological/educational needs of children. In such cases children adopt the company of bad elements/peer groups that eventually leads to induce a sense of irresponsibility in them, thus adding into groups involved in unhealthy activities at community level. Moreover, the process of development in education is further hindered. Secondly, poverty too affects the frequency of students' attendance. Many students have to provide financial sustenance to their families through working as a labourer for few days in a week. It becomes very difficult for such students to strike balance between work and school, and it mostly leads to discontinuation of their studies.

In the prevailing circumstances, the multifaceted dilemma of development in education requires a strong leadership imbued with inter-personal skills. The schools' administrators acknowledged the importance of team work for better combating the issues discussed above. But each of them delineated his/her efforts in utilising the existing resources in best possible way according to his/her own understanding. Most of them restricted their views to regulate their staff. It was only observed in school No. 1 where different committees were functioning in different sectors like sports, library, administration, attendance, discipline and affairs outside of school. The principal explained the outputs of his team as:

“my teachers have selected specialized areas of interest where they perform independently. My interference is restricted to their guidance and provision of resources only. I have also made a special committee that works to motivate the local leadership for providing the necessary resources to the school”.

During interview with the principal, and in PTC meeting too, I observed close interaction of his staff with him. The teachers frequented his office, sharing progress made in certain areas and listened to him for future course of action. The spirit of team work was seen fluctuating in the other three sampled schools. Virtually all principals advocated the idea of team work and its need in the current circumstances, but the implementing parameters differed a lot. Most of the time, low institutional performance was directly linked with parents' lack of interest.

It was a common argument held by the principals that a child used to spend 3/4th of his time at home with parents as compared to schools where he/she used to come for 4-6 hours, six days a week. Somewhere it looked that they tried to completely shift the responsibility of educational needs of a child from school to home. When probed the issue, all of the administrators approved the importance of parental involvement for better education of their children. Principal of school No. 1 suggested that all administrators should be made answerable to the concerned communities. “It would produce positive results”, he added, “if the political interference was minimised in educational institutions”.

Supporting the desired objectives, the principals welcomed participation of community/parents in decision making process in school through PTCs. They stated that it was providing an opportunity for the administrators to access the local community resources for maximizing the output of the schools. Although some of the principals had some reservations about the policy as a successful tool for

crystalizing the required results; yet they considered it as a useful exercise (the issue is described in the following paragraphs).

5.3.1. c) Principals' Views about the Structure and Functions of PTC

In District *Karak* too, all principals admitted that objectives of PTC were beneficial for optimal performance of schools. People of the district were more cognisant, so the policy was seen implemented as per the prescribed parameters. The essence and original configuration of the organizations are given in chapter 2, 4 and a copy of PTC guide is also attached as annex 1; but my focus here is to search out its applicability/application in the field. I observed that all the stakeholders appreciated the idea of community-school links through such councils (PTCs), but the difference was found in its structure and functions; and the forces behind it that needed in-depth analysis.

The principals narrated that they were trying their best to implement the policy of parental involvement in a true sense. Although, most of the PTC members were old/retired but educated. In contrast to district *Shangla*, where selection of the members was made by the principals in consultation with few '*mashran*' (elder members), they were elected by parents. Nonetheless, the principal of school No.2 was not satisfied with the election process. He said:

“in the present circumstances, I would prefer selection process instead of holding election among fewer less interested, less educated and less energetic parents in hand”.

The PTC members in the school were old enough to participate actively. When I inquired the principal about the process of election, he told that “I invited the parents of all 350 students through letters and phone calls, but only 40 of them attended the annual parents' day”. He showed me the complete list of fathers, their addresses and

phone numbers. He concluded that it would be ridiculous to expect a major breakthrough in development of education through the councils in the current situation. Principal of school No.4 too gave almost the same response. When I asked him the reason of discouraging level of parental involvement, he told that most of fathers had many children but their income was low; therefore, they could not find time to concentrate upon their children's studies.

Principals of school No.1 and 3 gave encouraging accounts of PTCs. Principal of school No.1 appreciated the support/help extended by chairman and members of the council. He told:

“they constantly support the stance of the school and we have formed a team for following the interest of the institutions. Their volunteerism is clearly reflected from the fact that they came to school today on short notice/message in such warm/hot day”.

Not only the principal was satisfied with the collaboration of community; the fathers too affirmed his leadership qualities. Similarly, principal of Government Girls High School (GGHS) No.3 who was transferred recently, also appreciated the role of PTC members and chairman. It was difficult to believe that illiterate/low literate mothers in rural *Pakhtun* areas too can contribute, the principal responded to my query as under:

“actually I discuss problems related to schools, teachers and students with the chairman and members of PTC and then they share the issues with their male family members (husbands, fathers or brothers). In this way a solution is sorted out”.

Actually these members play the role of a bridge between the school and power structure of *Pakhtun* community.

5.3.1. d) Principals' Views on Level/Status of Community Participation in Pakistan

Principals in the district correlated PTCs with meeting challenges impeding the development goals. They highlighted the importance/need of the councils having positive impacts but some of them also relied only on theoretical repercussions where they actually took into consideration the finances provided through it. Most of the principals demonstrated the on-ground benefits of PTCs in obtaining the goals of schools. In the paragraphs below, the actual status of these councils is portrayed with gradual shift from physical maintenance of school's building to sharing mutual resources of school and community.

Like district *Shangla*, prudent utilization of PTC fund was thought to be sufficed as a parameter for proper functioning of the councils. The issues addressed in this regard also resembled to that prevailed in district *Shangla*. Principals of school No. 2 and No. 4 enumerated the white wash of building and repairing of classrooms and furniture as outcomes of PTCs. Principal of school No. 4 limited his discussion to the utilization of funds as, I thought at first, he considered me a member of investigation team from higher authorities, despite the fact that he knew me by person. But at the end of the discussion I concluded that he was not interested in the education of children showing insincerity with his profession. He told that they teach to those who come to school which was their only responsibility. He said:

“it is the responsibility of a teacher to take a student to the source of water and it is up to the student to drink water or not”.

Principal of school No. 2 added a little more by telling that he was successful in getting /attaining the trust of PTC members for improving the quality and quantity

of development measures. He was disappointed with the response of the parents as a whole. In this regard in interview he said:

“I used different channels to contact parents and asked them participate in the annual meeting at least but I could hardly bring 40 fathers out of 350 on board at the end of the day”.

Among many reasons, said the principal, the two most important were 1) lack of awareness and 2) the earning of livelihood. As stated in the earlier chapters, the members of lower/working class failed to envisage a direct link in getting education and its subsequent role in job market. In introduction of the chapter and in locale of the study in chapter 3, it was pointed out that most of the people in district *Karak* are paid employers in different sectors throughout the country. The changing situation i.e., overpopulation, unemployment and specialization in every field made the correlation between getting a degree and chances of obtaining employment in Pakistan more fragile. This diminishing relationship between education and employment had strong negative impact upon the attitude of poor people. Consequently, many such parents made rational choice to shift their children to job market at early stage. Secondly, the working class fathers were more concerned with providing basic necessities to their ever expanding families. In such circumstances they got frustrated and unheeded the call from their children's school.

On the other hand, the PTCs had been helpful to the participants in taking need based steps to improve the standard of education. All of the schools buildings and classrooms repairing got first priority in this list. In most cases PTC fund was used in improving/ maintaining physical infrastructure of the institution like replacement of doors and windows, repairing walls, its white wash and installation of white boards. Such initiatives were made more prominent and visible in School No. 1 and

No 2. In school No. 2 exhaust fans in class rooms were also installed apart from installation of Uninterrupted Power Supply (UPS) system for continuous power supply in the prevalent energy crisis in Pakistan. Principal of the school told that PTC had demanded a hall for the school which would play a great role in conducting not only the smooth examinations but also help in arranging co-curricular activities. With the help of the council, need based teachers were also hired by the principal for short time in order to provide better teaching facilities for the students. Trust between the school and community was reflected by the fact that a father had contributed PKR .05 million to the school for erecting/repairing the boundary wall damaged by the recent floods.

5.3.1. e) Principals on role of PTC as a Tool in the Development of Education

Communication and volunteerism are complementary types in synergy view of social capital building and Epstein's model (see chapter 2 for detail). Epstein (1995) observes that communication between school and community is directly proportional with socio-economic status. The argument is very much in line with situation in Pakistan where poor fathers in district *Shangla*, *Karak* and *Abbottabad* hesitated to communicate with their children's schools. So it was supposed in combining the two models that PTC will grease the wheels in mobilising a positive communication between school and community. Once succeeded in bringing the parents to school, their inclusion in decision making process will lead to achieve the objectives of remaining four types of involvement i.e., parenting, learning at home, volunteering and collaborating with community.

In district *Karak*, the utilized PTC fund is self-evident. In contrast to district *Shangla*, its domain here is not restricted to the selection of few individuals in the

community. The scope of the councils exceeds in its structure and functions. Thus, a complementarity between synergy view of social capital building and Epstein's model of parental involvement can be observed though not so much developed. A conflicting situation between PTC and the principal in school No. 4 had badly affected school-community relationship already discussed in detail latter in this chapter. In the other 3 schools/communities gradual move was observed in bridging links between the stakeholders for the development of children's education.

Principal of school No.1 and 3 categorically endorsed a reciprocal communication between PTC members and the school. Principal of school No.1 told that he called the community members/parents in the first annual meeting and received a very positive response from them. They were explained the motives of the council and its importance/need in education of their children. When I visited the school to attend PTC meeting in May, 2013, the members patiently carried out the process for long time. When I asked the principal about the zeal of volunteerism among such members, he said:

“I think nothing can demonstrate the enthusiasm of the people better than their presence at the moment for so long time, as you observed in the meeting; these people are farmers and they are busy now-a-days in harvesting the wheat crop manually in such hot season, still they came and participated in the meeting”.

Principal of school No. 3 also gave somewhat similar statement, verifying the spirit of volunteerism in community members and parents.

Analysing the difference in response of different four communities, I found a strong relationship between institutional performance/inclusion of community/parents in decision making process and communication/volunteerism with the school. In their PTC meetings in above mentioned 2 schools, I observed that principals put across the problems and they discussed their solutions utilising the existing and alternative

resources with confidence. Final decisions were made by the principals in the light of posted suggestions. When I asked the principal of school No. 3 to explain the reasons why community members/ mothers desire to contribute in the development of the school/education, she said:

“although I am in bad books of teachers for maintaining strict discipline because they were not used to it in the past; yet the mothers/community members trust me and second my decisions/efforts. Because they know that I am working not for myself, rather this strategy is designed for the welfare of their children”.

The principal further told that in *Pakhtun* culture mothers are not in dominant position to act independently; therefore, male members of their families represented their stance in public offices.

The situation in school No. 4 verified my posed relationship between institutional performance and parental involvement. The principal was not interested in developing the standard of education and, hence, the PTC members showed a sense of distrust. Rather they criticised him for using PTC as source for illegal personal gains in the shape of financial corruption. In between these two opposite poles, mediocre efforts from the principal of school No. 2 gathered a normal/low response from the community. He was a bit disappointed with the discouraging ratio of father's participation/communication in annual meetings.

The tailored synergy also contributed in collaborating with community in different sectors. Principal of school No. 1 was jubilant at winning district level championship in volleyball, cricket and baseball in the previous year. He told that it was the result of arranging regular competitions in every sport between school team and the community team throughout the year. Generally all the principals looked forward for more contribution through such councils in the future.

5.3.2. EDO's Stance on the Functions of PTC

Executive district officer (EDO) in *Karak* was a bearded and gentle looking person in his fifties. He had worked as school teacher, principal and recently he was appointed as EDO. As he belonged to the district, therefore, he knew much about every school. When I introduced myself as a scholar, working on school-community links; he praised the achievements made by PTCs.

He told that government schools received much less finances under development head and hence, PTC was welcomed as a blessing in disguise by the principals. Any institution needs financial resources for taking even a small developmental step even. As I have simultaneously noted earlier that it was PTC fund that got attention of every principal/administrator. The same was reiterated by the EDO in the district too. When I tried to point out the other objectives of PTC, EDO only gave a nodding approval. He said:

“PTCs have been performing very well except in few cases where some charges of corruption have been labelled against principals. In most cases, they have proved their importance in improving the conditions of schools. They have also shared our burden of regular monitoring and have been successful in keeping smooth running of the institutions.”

It was observed that PTC members were elected by parents in annual meeting as prescribed in the policy but EDO proposed selection method in some cases where parents and community members were illiterate/less educated. The principal of school No. 2 was also of the same opinion where most of the PTC members were old and less educated. Both of the administrators were eager to include energetic and experienced people in the council for grabbing more achievements.

Without having thorough information, the EDO appreciated the role of the councils in regulating the staff and students, increasing enrolment ratio, decreasing dropout

ratio, expanding sports/co-curricular activities and developing the culture of local decision making for the development of education.

5.3.3. Teachers' Response on School-Community Link

Teachers occupy an important position in synergy of school and community. They are directly linked with students and principals correspond to issues raised by teachers in teaching-learning process. Therefore, the effectiveness of parental involvement depends upon the nature of relationship between the principal and his teaching staff. In traditional setup, teachers had been considered as subordinate under autocratic leadership of principal. The trend is prevalent even today in rural and to some extent in semi-urban/ urban areas of Pakistan. Whereas, a modern concept of teamwork is also adopted by the principals, especially in literate communities. In democratic leadership, the principals/administrators share the responsibilities with his staff and in turn, teachers show enthusiasm in performing their duties to maximize institutional performance.

In district *Karak*, both types of above mentioned relationships between teachers and principals persisted. Autocratic leadership in school No. 4 had divided the collective interest of teachers. The teachers looked indifferent towards institutional goals because they thought it was the responsibility of the principal to take staff on board while making decisions. A young teacher in his forties told:

“you are talking about school-community links whereas we yearn for bridging gaps among staff. We cannot take stand on issues with parents/community because principal has his own strategy of handling things. I admit that communication can help us a lot in improving the teaching-learning process but it is utmost important to first realise institutional goals inside the school”.

Most of the teachers in the school were content with their role of taking their classes regularly. Another teacher of the school, who had been very popular among

students, told that the common discussion in the staff revolved around personal benefits like promotions, increments in salaries and getting chance in conducting duty in examinations. He further added that several times I tried to take the discussions towards students' problems, teaching methods and parental involvement but every time I confronted a complete silence.

In contrast, the other type of principal-staff relationship i.e. democratic, led to team work in school 1 and 3. The staff of school No. 1 especially contributed not only in institutional performance but also appreciated the role of PTC in the development of education. A middle age teacher of the school said:

“every teacher shares his experiences with the principal in general meeting and then it is put on in agenda of upcoming PTC meeting for discussion. With the help of PTC members, we have been successful in controlling absentees of students and completion of proper homework. Similarly, face to face communication of parents with teachers helps to understand the psyche/individuality of students which ultimately aid in better parenting and enhancing teacher learning process too”.

Another teacher of the school, who was young, added that the parents belonged to the same community; hence, the parents/fathers had been collaborating with the school on issues of all children. In other words, PTC provided a chance for parents to form a collective platform and take part in the development of education.

5.3.4. Parents Perceptions about Parental Involvement and Functioning of PTC

As stated earlier, *Karak* is one of the districts in KP with highest literacy rate. The inhabitants have been successful in acquiring jobs in government/semi government organizations sheerly through their qualifications. They have no alternative like agricultural land or trend of establishing industries for earning livelihood. Most of the parents focus upon securing government jobs for their children and, hence, prefer to educate them in the best possible way. Apart from government schools, many

private schools have also been established by individuals to cater for better education and emerging needs of fast growing population.

My experience in the field reflected this general overview of parental interest in their children's education. As a whole, most of the communities showed their interest/concern more on the outcome of education rather than focusing on the process of education. Inclination of the people towards use of unfair means in examination for securing good marks validates the assumption. The practice was in vogue more vividly in past few decades and now people have turned over to improving the process of education. Such efforts are individual in nature and directed towards improving the quality of education at personal levels. For example, the improved parenting style is now more prone towards better socialization of their children. More attention is given to restrict child's activities in homes to complete homework and attend tuition classes. Similarly, parents make utmost efforts to admit their children in more popular schools.

When I asked parents about the need of school-community link; they revealed a positive concern for their children's school. Most of them admitted its importance and they looked towards school's administration for taking initiative. They thought that school's staff was better equipped with skills and resources which they could utilize for better performance. The views of parents in sampled four communities were not on single page; rather, disparity in their thinking led to the following three distinct groups.

The first group of parents appreciated the role of school's administration for ever increasing share of school in improving the standard of education. Parents in community 1 and 3 not only offered verbal support in favour of the schools; they

also took active part in decision making process at institutional level. A father from community No. 1, who was a retired x-ray technician, elaborated the synergy in these words:

“the school is an important part of our community and it is our good luck that the whole staff in general and principal in particular work hard to deliver best possible education. We are in close contact with the principal and extend all we can do”.

Almost the same response was given by mothers in community No. 3. Although the mothers were less educated and did not know much about the required contribution to the school, yet they told that they had been sharing their experiences with their husbands for feasible course of action. Parents in both the communities lauded the efforts in improving general conditions of the schools on one hand and involving parents to give attention to their children’s education at home on the other hand. A mother in this regard told:

“with consultation with the teacher, I make my daughter do homework regularly and sometimes I ask from the mother of her class fellows about the routine of their daughters in home. In this way a congenial atmosphere is created in most of the families in the community”.

Parents from the two communities told that they could not manage to revise the lessons taught in school with their children. Because they themselves were less literate/illiterate.

The second group of parents did not show any interest in educating their children. Parents from community No. 2 just managed to send their children to school. Most of the fathers left their education before completing high school certificate. They were now working as labourers or running small shops. It is pertinent to remind that the community constituted of urban area of the district only. I asked one of such fathers about school-community tie, he told:

“I send my children to school and I can do nothing if she/he is not interested in studies. I cannot make my child to do hard work nor can a teacher instil a sense in them. I blame no one for it. If my child does not study, he should be prepared to bear hard times like me”.

Most of the fathers from the community were indifferent towards their children’s school, consistent with remarks of the school’s Principal who told that only one out of ten fathers attended the annual parents day last year.

The third group of parents were critical upon school administration. They were not satisfied with the school’s performance. Fathers from community No. 4 used harsh words against the principal of the school. They alleged him with charges of financial corruption. Few of the local teachers were also reported to be involved with him. A father who was dental technician gave his opinion in these words:

“government spends a lot on running schools but the staff is not serious in getting educational objectives. Teachers are busy earning more through alternative ways like examination duties, paper marking or side businesses. In this situation, I would prefer to be secluded from the school at least. If government does not take any action, I would think of shifting my kids to some other school”.

The community members were literate and understood the need of reciprocal relationship between school and community. They thought that the current administration of the school was a main hindrance in forging the gap.

5.3.5. Views of PTC Members Regarding the Role of PTC in the Development of Education

PTC plays the role of a bridge between school and community. The level of reciprocity between the two poles is subjected to the determination of principals. It is established in chapter 3 that school administration is the most contributive stakeholder and the study so far verifies the vital importance of principals’ efforts in parental involvement. The element of trust is incorporated through making contribution in the forging synergy. Where ever the principals have succeeded in

putting more value to the system through institutional performance; an encouraging response is extended by the community. In district *Karak*, PTCs are formulated through proper electoral process. How they perceive the situation is going to be discussed in the following paragraphs.

In district *Karak*, I observed that PTCs accepted the roles they are given. They voluntarily communicated as a linking factor between the school and community except school/community No. 4 where a serious conflict was going on between the council and the principal. In the other 3 schools, the chairman and members welcomed the relationship with the school and mentioned different joint ventures to facilitate each other.

In school No. 1 and 3, the members endorsed the best possible use of allocated funds. They said that they are satisfied with the quality of education in the school. The fact was self-explanatory in school No. 1 because students' enrolment increased from 400 to 750 in single year. A member of PTC in the school commented upon the benefits of PTC in the following words:

“on this forum we have got an opportunity to decide local problems and help each other for better results. The principal sought our help on many occasions and we discussed the issues and made fruitful decisions”.

The members were happy from the school administration for managing separate classes for girls, starting English medium classes and regulating sports activities. Another member told that they had managed shortage of staff through financial help from parents. They have consulted their political leader for constructing multi-purpose hall for the school. Responding to a question, the member acknowledged the support of parents through maintain regular contact with them which had better

impact upon parenting style, observance of proper home work time table and sports activities’.

PTC members in school No. 2 were mostly senior experienced/retired persons. They acknowledged the sincerity of the principal and teachers. When I put the principal’s stance on lack of parental interest, a member, who was a retired teacher, treated the parents in harsh words:

“most of such parents are stupid. They have procured many children without any plan. They send their children to school as animals are herded to mountains. It is useless to expect any positive response from them”.

As mentioned in the start of the chapter, the school was situated in an urban area of the district and there was little face to face interaction of PTC members with whole community. Instead of educating the fathers, the members shunned their responsibility by using insulting language for them. The principal of the school was also not happy with the council and urged for selection process for its formulation instead of holding elections,

In school No. 4, the situation was opposite to the one mentioned above. The council openly talked against the principal for making corruption and PTC as a source of corruption/personal gains. The chairman of PTC, a retired DEO, said:

“PTC is a foreign agenda with implicit objective of making the heads of school corrupt. There is no benefit of it for a school. The principals put the money in their pockets and the council is a ‘rubber stamp’. Anyone can arrange a fake PTC to reimburse the funds and utilize it”.

It was the only case throughout my field study that the council rejected the idea altogether. The EDO and director categorically endorsed the effectiveness of PTCs in the district and labelled the comments as baseless. They also told that it was the single case reported so far. It reflects a specific mind set of a group of people in

Pakistan who reject every idea that comes from West. As a whole, PTC was regarded a better strategy for parental investment and development of education.

5.3.6. Students' Perceptions about Parental Involvement

All efforts of educational institutions are directed towards students' achievements. The ultimate goal of education is to render congenial teaching-learning environment. Children are minute observer of their surroundings and environment at home and school shape their personalities. An event can encourage or discourage certain traits of a child's personality. The impact of parental involvement in a child's school is manifold (Epstein, 1995) in developed countries.

Students were satisfied from school's environment where PTCs were functional like school No. 1, 3 and to some extent in school No. 2. In former two schools, students showed discipline, enthusiasm in their studies and interest in co-curricular activities.

A student from school No. 1 told:

“our institution is one of the best. My teachers are hard working. They help us in our studies and doing our homework properly. If any student does not maintain his homework notebook punctually, his father is contacted and informed about his child's progress”.

Usually, such parents are called upon through another student living nearby. Second time, the task is given to a PTC member to contact the parents and discuss the issue of their child. Apart from study, PTC also works to cater for co-curricular activities of the children. Sports events are arranged between the community and school team.

Another student highlighted the issue as follow:

“we enjoy participating in co-curricular activities and it becomes manifold when the whole community and parents support them as spectators. We have won many trophies at district level because we have routine timetable for playing”.

A PTC member approved the ongoing competition among different teams in the community and told that the '*mashran*' award prizes to the winners too.

5.4. Conclusion

All of the stake holder especially the principals marked the establishment of PTCs a major breakthrough in the development process. The principals held that the council is a volunteer group in the shape of a check, no doubt, upon them but it facilitated them in taking decisions, resource provision, communication with parents and a providing feedback upon their performance.

In a school the chairman of PTC blamed the parents for showing lack of interest in their children's schooling. He termed it 'herding of children to school'. Contrary to this situation, a chairman of PTC in another school criticised the policy and declared it a part of Western strategy to encourage corruption in this country like International Non-Government Organizations (INGOs).

However, most of the PTC members and parents acknowledged the importance of the councils in channelizing many issues. The issues ranged from establishing punctuality to monitoring homework, providing need based teachers, locating/acquiring resources, better parenting and encouraging co-curricular activities.

6.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, coordination between synergy view of social capital building and Epstein's model of parental involvement was established at least in one school/community. Behind this synergy, many factors operated like principals' commitment towards parental involvement, education/awareness among masses, democratic attitude and consideration of public institutions like government school as a part of community. Schools in district *Abbottabad* reflect steady progress in the above mentioned aspects and this is why directorate of education declares it a model district. The heterogeneous nature of population in urban and semi-urban areas of the district caters for more bridging links in the communities. However, political interference in institutions retards the would-be momentum of linking social capital.

Before presenting the views of stakeholders i.e. Principals, teachers, parents/community members and students representing school-community links, a brief introduction of all four schools/communities is presented first. In this chapter, the focus of data shifts from weak synergy between school and community to the actual development in education and it will make the readers understand the logic behind the hybridization of the two theoretical models.

6.2. Communities/Schools in District *Abbottabad*

District *Abbottabad* is one of the oldest cities of KP. It represents North East areas of the province where an array of communities are settled including *Pakhtuns*. These tribes include *Jadoons*, *Awan*, *Abassi*, *Aryans* and some other small communities. The local language is *Hindko* and *Saraiki*. The area of the district is 1967sq/km with

881,000 population (DCR, 1998). Most of its area is mountainous in nature, making the weather pleasant and healthy. Moreover, its scenic beauty attracts people throughout the year.

Pleasant environment of the district fascinated British officers during British regime in India and they established cantonment in the city. The city was named after the first deputy commissioner of *Hazara* (1849–1853) ‘Major James Abbott’ and now it is called *Abbottabad* (IUCN Pakistan, 2004). Many affluent families from all over the country have migrated to the district because of its beautiful weather and natural beauty. Amalgamation of different cultures led to the emergence of a heterogeneous society. High educational attainment of the inhabitants levelled ground for peaceful co-existence and an urge to achieve developmental goals.

Among many, the most appreciated area of development is education sector. Almost all private educational institutions of national repute have established their branches in district *Abbottabad*. Parental interest in their children’s education and schools’ determination to provide better teaching-learning environment compelled directorate of education to declare it a model district of KP. It would be a weak hypothetical statement if we say that there is an ideal working relationship between/among different institutions that provide conducive environment for development. During my field work, I observed a degree of political interference at each level of administration. Most of the time it hampered achieving the desired results but the administrators absorbed external pressure patiently instead of surrendering to it.

Institutions in the district are part of the local culture, unlike the other two districts, where public institutions are not owned by the community. The inhabitants have built democratic aptitude relying on bridging links. In rural areas too, one hardly

finds bonding networks. Heterogeneous nature of communities, democratic aptitude and bridging networks place the district on high altitude of standards. Broadmindedness of the people is affirmatively reciprocated by the administrators. When I visited the office of Executive District Officer (EDO), he telephonically contacted principals of three boys' and a girls' school and briefed them about my visit to the schools/communities.

6.2.1. Community/School No.1

The EDO allocated me a girls' higher secondary school in the city and I took start from an urban community. The school was established at one corner of local market. The building was old in style revealing its magnificent grandeur. Principal of the school welcomed me at school's gate and took me to her office. At first, she was cautious in discussing things but later on felt relaxed when I disclosed my interest in studying school-community links.

It was one of the biggest schools accommodating more than 4000 students. The classrooms and laboratories were fully equipped and as a whole, the school was giving a decent look. The principal was a middle-aged woman living nearby with her husband and three children. She had admitted her two school going children in a renowned public school on the advice of her husband who was a bank manager. She appreciated the cooperation of her staff and community members. Two teachers selected for interview belonged to the same district. Both were married; one having a daughter only and the other had a son and a daughter. They had admitted their children in the school in which they were teaching, obviously due to their low income.

My two sampled students belonged to working class families. Family of one student had migrated from rural area to city some 10 years back. Her father was a plumber earning Rs. 2,50,000 per annum. She had two brothers and a sister: the eldest sister and brother were married and the younger brother was studying in a government school. The younger brother also helped his father in business after school hours. The father of my second student respondent was a shopkeeper in a street near her home. She had four sisters and two brothers. Her sisters were elder to her and could not attend school because in their community of orientation female education was a social taboo. Both of her brothers were younger to her and they were admitted in a government school. She told that her father migrated to *Abbottabad* primarily for educating her brothers. And it was her good luck that she also got admission in a school.

PTC members also came from the same background. The chairperson was an old lady having decent interpersonal skills. She had got education up to matric level. A member, who had been general councillor, was also an aged woman having canny disposition. PTC members and sampled mothers were vocal in esteeming their role. They appreciated the performance of school and criticised those parents/mothers who could not visit the school.

Generally, girls' education was somewhat equally focussed like that of boys, indicating an existence of gender awareness as compared to other two districts.

6.2.2. School/Community No.2

The second school of my field in the district was a boys' higher secondary school in the East corner of the city. The area was populated; roads were narrow, and the school was surrounded by high residential buildings. A covered drainage canal was

dividing the school's building into two halves. The school was also old and artistically maintained. Office of the principal was full of shields and trophies won by school teams in different co-curricular activities. One such shield was presented by PTC members to the current principal and his staff for the best performance in the last academic year.

The principal was simple man in his late fifties. When I entered office of the principal, he was discussing some issue with his staff in a corner; Initially, I misunderstood him for a teacher. He shared about his schooling and family background without being ostentatious. When I appreciated the performance of his school, he graciously smiled and humbly replied that it was his duty. He told that all his four children (3 boys and a girl), had studied in government institutions and had got certificates with distinctions. I talked to two teachers of the school, who belonged to nearby communities of the district. They were living an average life standard. They showed much concern about their children's education; however, they were satisfied from their children's schooling in government institutions.

PTC chairman and members ran small businesses in the local markets. The principal called PTC meeting on cell phone and all members arrived shortly. They told that their family members had been studying in the same school for the last three generations. Parents too, who shared the same economic and social background, considered the school staff accessible and showed complete satisfaction with their performance. The students were more polite and sharp. They were confident and systematically elaborated their answers. One of the student belonged to '*Pakhtun*' tribe living with his two uncles and their children. He told that his father had been working as sub engineer with a government contractor, mainly supplementing into the whole family sustenance. His father was supporting the educational expenses of

6 boys and 8 girls. The other student came from ‘*Jadoon*’ family with a brother and a sister. His brother was three years old and his sister was studying in government school. His father was a primary school teacher. Amidst of urban life where everyone pursues personal interest, the community supported the seat of learning through joint venture.

6.2.3. School/Community No.3

I selected the third school in a semi urban area lying in Eastern side of the district. It was a boys higher secondary school. Its building was newly built but still incomplete. Make shift arrangement had been made for windows and electricity by the school administration to make it operational. The principal told that it was left incomplete because insufficient funds were provided and the contractor had to abandon its completion a year ago. The principal was non-local living without his family. He was a young man and casual in communicating his ideas. Ironically, he was dissatisfied from the performance of government school at his home town where his family was residing, and criticized parents at current job station. In the former part of the argument, the principal tried to implicitly validate his decision of preferring private school over government school because his children were studying in a middle standard private school. In the later part, he looked to conceal his lack of commitment in instituting school-community link.

Majority of the school teachers belonged to the local community. A teacher told that he could not afford private education of his children; therefore, he had admitted his children (3 boys and 4 girls) in government schools. Another teacher from the same background complained against the non-seriousness of government in implementing education policy. Most of the students in the school lacked promising spark. They had accepted wearing school uniform as a ritual showing little ambition to

concentrate upon their studies. One of the students told that his father was a carpenter and he was not sure how much literate his father was.

The community consisted of small clusters living on a range of mountainous area. Most of the people had migrated to the locality from remote regions of the province. They belonged to the rural areas. The present locality was far developed as compared to their place of origination. A father told that there were better chances of earning livelihood and educating their children. Another father working in government organization as typist told that he could not find time to actively participate in his children's education. The chairman of the PTC was an old man who could hardly manage to visit the school. There was a clear lack of coordination between PTC and the school. The fact was verified by the principal, as he said:

“Pakistanis are not yet developed to the extent where they could offer their services to the state voluntarily”

Management of the school was merely giving an operational look. The main difference was that neither the principal nor parents were local.

6.2.4. School/Community No. 4

The last boys' school I selected, away from the city, was located in the Northern area of the district. The school was surrounded by communities on small mountains. Most of the houses were semi-cemented and looked built one the over other, viewing from the school. The school building was also constructed in two layers along naturally changing altitude. As a whole, the locality gave a fascinating look. Principal of the school was telephonically contacted by EDO and he was waiting for me. He cordially welcomed and briefed me about ongoing development in the school. A few posters/quotes hanging in his office clearly reflected the taste of an educationist. The principal told that he had been working as a principal in the

institution for the last three years. The marked improvement in secondary school results displayed on honour board of the last three years spoke volume of the academic achievements.

The principal was young and had no children, yet he told that his nephews were studying in the same institution. Most of the teachers were local and their children were also admitted in the school. It should be noted that there were no popular private schools established in the locality. When asked about the reason from a teacher he said that the community was satisfied with the standard of education in their school. Students of the schools also displayed a sense of discipline. They were observed as shy Compared to the students in the city schools who were more spontaneous.

The community was heterogeneous in nature and peaceful co-existence was observed among all inhabitants. The elders/parents were not highly educated but were determined to equip the young generation with skill. The graduates had been serving in different organizations while elders had been working in little cultivatable area. They could not rely on agricultural output for the reason of scarcity of land and its uneven nature. But unlike rural areas in other parts of the province, I observed minimum generation gap in the community. The elders were eager to regulate the study timetable of their grandsons/daughters.

The chairman of PTC was a retired teacher and he was very popular in the whole community. Members of the council showed warm support to the chairman and the principal. They were like friends; discussing different issues in PTC meeting. Their mutual interaction revealed that the school was an integral part of the community. A father who was running a fruit business in local market appreciated the hard work of

teachers. Another father who was working in a government organization also verified the mutual understanding of school and parents/community.

6.3. Stakeholders' Perceptions about School and Community Link

Administrators/principals/teachers and parents/community members are equal partners/stakeholders in children's education (Epstein, 1995, 2000). In developing countries like Pakistan, the former group is entrusted more responsibility in this enterprise. They occupy central position in school-community synergy as established in chapter 2. Furthermore, importance of institutional view of social capital building in parental involvement is endorsed through findings/explanations in chapter 4 and 5. In current chapter too, the same themes are put to analysis in different setting and changed communal patterns.

6.3.1. a) Principals' Views about School-Community Link

Population of district *Abbottabad* is multilingual in nature (Ali, 2005). It was substantiated by the fact that principals of four targeted schools were in contrast to each other in many respects like age, social background, language, culture, dressing etc. However, these differences did not lead to diverging/conflicting opinions in institutional norms and need of social networks with community and parents.

All of the principals hailed the government's policy of parental/community involvement in school's affairs. Rather, the school was considered to be integral organ of local community. The principals opined that schools were established with the manifest aim of serving a community where they had been delivering to facilitate that cause. Principal of school No. 2 vividly portrayed the importance of school-community link in these words:

“education is a mutual activity of school and community. The nature of reciprocity is complementary to reinforce mutual efforts. We, the administrators, would be at

weaker wicket in imparting better education to the children if community does not extend its cooperation”.

Similarly, the principals also pinpointed the social capital lying at the corners of social networks between a school and the locality. As school is influenced by its surroundings, in turn, the community could also be moulded by the overall institutional operating procedures. This is why a consistent bond between the two was considered vital by the principals for the promotion of common developmental cause.

It is true that principals in all the three case studies deemed positive the idea of social capital building in the development of education: however, it was restricted to lip service in district *Shangla* and perhaps to more extent in district *Karak*. Little efforts were made by the schools’ management in these two districts to translate the idea into a reality. In contrast, most of the principals in district *Abbottabad* showed their commitment for parental involvement beyond verbal approval. The fact was reflected by the democratic attitudes of principals, mutual trust between the school and community and the latter’s willing and enthusiastic participation in the curricular and co-curricular activities organised by the school. The subject will have description in the chapter to follow.

6.3.1. b) Principals’ Views about Institutional Goals and their Realization

Theorization of institutional capital building carries on its sojourn from abstract to concrete level along the three case studies. It is characterised in the shape of inefficiency in district *Shangla* congruent with local culture; its take off in district *Karak* and its boom in district *Abbottabad*. Schools in the latter district deliver its services to community, observing institutional norms through team work of the staff in democratic environment. The principals of the schools were highly educated and

displayed professional skills. The EDO appreciated the developed strategies of the principals in obtaining educational goals. He proudly declared that he had been successful in getting the right persons for school administration.

In most of the schools, the environment, class rooms, and specifically the principals' offices spoke louder than the verbal statements of the administrators and teachers. The excellence in co-curricular activities was observed in the shape of huge trophies beautifully arranged in principals' offices. Most of the time, it was difficult for me to identify principal among his staff due to the prevailing harmony between them. A spirit of teamwork in school's staff was observed throughout the district. Explaining the scope of democratic environment in school No. 4, the principal said:

“it is my responsibility to maintain balance between institutional norms and individual autonomy. My staff enjoys liberty within the established parameters. If a staff member cannot work to achieve educational goals; his services are relegated to the district office with explanation letter”.

The principal further told that district office replaced one of his good teachers with a low profile teacher because of political pressure: but he did not accept the substitute. This was a big enterprise on behalf of a principal in the existing culture of political influence in institutions. When we compare the three sampled districts; *Karak* and *Shangla* absorbed such type of interference thus compromising upon institutional objectives. This is why a sense of team work could not mature and teachers worked as individuals in those two districts. The feature makes district *Abbottabad* distinguished in obtaining institutional goals and Directorate of Education KP rightly termed it 'a model district'.

Generally, the administrators throughout the province complained against the poor interest of parents in their children's education. Principals in the current district too showed dissatisfaction with parent's role/interest in their kids' education. They

thought that they could achieve development goals in short span of time if supported by parents. Behind the issue, the same dilemma of poverty persisted here too. Majority of students came from poor/working class who looked busy in earning livelihoods. But principals told that it was impossible to achieve MDGs (Millennium development Goals) without parental interest. In order to achieve these goals, they hailed the idea of parental involvement through PTCs.

6.3.1. c) Principals' Views about the Aims and Objectives of PTC

In district *Abbottabad*, the principals called parental involvement a 'clarion call' and considered the policy of introducing PTCs in school as an effective channel to attract community. The importance and need of inclusiveness of marginal parents in their children's school's activities is generally established throughout the world. The issue of exclusiveness of parents is more severe in Pakistan where majority of population can be put in "marginal" category. Hence, in the succeeding paragraphs, the principals' efforts to attract marginal parents through PTCs, in comparatively better teaching-learning environment is presented.

All of my sampled principals in the district appreciated the role of parent-teacher-councils. They told that such councils empowered them in taking bold decisions locally. Many problems of a school need timely decision and usual delays in departmental correspondence aggravate the situation. Parallel to it, each community has its own peculiar features that need to be addressed. In such cases, the councils play an important role in ensuring joint responsibility. Principal of school No. 2 stated the prime objective of PTC as:

"I feel confident in collaborating with the community members on certain issues. They not only support our mission but also contribute in selecting better options. I discuss an issue with the forum and listens to their observations/suggestions. In this way a relationship of trust builds and they own the cause of the school".

Along with social support such councils are endowed with financial support from the government. One and a half lac rupees are given to each school for the promotion of education. Principals utilize the funds in mutual consultation with the members of these councils. Although the sum is not a huge budgetary provision; still it is taken for granted to meet the pressing needs of the institutions. The transparent use of the money is ensured by the members. In the process, general equipment/daily items are lent by the community.

Being an influential part of the community, PTC members have been working as a channel between the school and the locality. Those parents who could come to school are kept updated by them. If need be, children's parents are communicated by the school's administration and vice versa. In this way a general atmosphere of trust and reciprocity develops.

The PTC members and principals were not happy from parental interest in their children education. The principals told that they had been making sincere efforts to attract parents through PTC members and local teachers but still they could not succeed. Although the situation was changing but its pace was slow. They told that majority of the fathers were poor and they could not manage to visit their children schools. A sense of inferiority in parents was observed in the district too. Some fathers took it as a futile exercise. However, the PTC members did not look discouraged at the present scenario and looked forward for better tomorrow.

6.3.1. d) Principals' Views on Level/Status of Community-School Partnership in Pakistan

The policy of establishing PTCs in the district was implemented in accordance with the prescribed procedure. Few years back, male members were selected as members of PTCs in girls' schools but the high ups denounced the idea and female community

members were in it. Although, the district education officer (DEO), (who was a female), appreciated the earlier structure. The principals told that announcements were made in mosque through loudspeakers a day prior to the election of the council. The community members /parents enthusiastically participated in every election. The elected bodies were then told about their responsibilities.

Almost all the principals showed gratitude to the members and admitted the significant role they had been playing in improving the standards of education. Each principal shared accounts of the help received. Principal of school No. 4 told that chairman of PTC brought the school furniture in his own vehicle and he also bought a revolving chair for the principal. Principal of school No.1 and 2 told that water pumps along with filtration plants were installed by the members of PTCs.

Apart from financial support, the members took care of the schools like their own property. Principals said that regular meetings were held in response to rising issues in the schools and the councils had been successful in resolving them. Amicably resolving issues like immodest approach by teenagers towards girls outside school No. 1 premises, encroachment upon the playground of school No. 2 and facilitating school No. 3's administration in the newly constructed incomplete building, were some of the worth mentioning steps in the long list of positives done by the council. I observed a team work among the members of PTCs and school administration. When I requested the principal of school No. 2 to arrange PTC meeting; he took me to a bookshop and introduced the owner as chairman of PTC. The chairman immediately called other members on phone for meeting when the principal told him purpose of our visit. On the way to bookshop I noticed a page in the hand of principal which turned out to be agenda of the meeting. Really it was a gathering

symbolising commitment, devotedness, compassion, teamwork, enthusiasm and beyond all, a love for future generation.

Along with maintenance of physical infrastructure and improvement in environment of the schools, the principals told that the councils encouraged co-curricular activities. The members arrange tournaments of games, quiz, support the teams of their schools and award prizes to the winners. Similarly, special awards are given to the position holders in annual examinations, students of the year etc. Principal of school No. 2 expressed his views in these words:

“the chairman and members of PTC in my school, rather I would call them my partners, abreast of minute detail of the school. Whenever I shared an idea with them, they showed keen interest in it. Playground of our school was disturbed /ruined by rains and when I talked to them, they started work on it the next day. They physically worked on it and paid the total expenditures from their own pockets”.

This was the only district where almost all of the annual days were celebrated and walks/campaigns were held regularly. The enrolment campaign was the most important one which inculcated awareness in the illiterate communities. The efforts translated into huge strength of these schools i.e. in thousands. Extra classrooms and teachers were managed locally by the councils utilizing the minimum resources.

The principals told that they had hired many teachers on adhoc basis in consultation with the PTC members. Although there were no sanctioned posts of computer teachers yet they offered computer subject and the council managed qualified teachers. Principal of school No. 2 further told that he had been successful in countering political pressure in adjusting a low profile teacher in his school because of support from the community. However, the principal of school No. 3 showed some dissatisfaction with the current structure of the council. He said that there was lack of volunteerism among Pakistanis as a nation and asked for some type of

remuneration for the members of the councils. This claim was against the reality because I had observed a strong sense of determination in these members in other three schools. The principal did not belong to the district and the chairman of PTC was an aged person. This may be the reason that a strong synergy between school and community failed to emerge. The impact of this synergy upon the process of development in education would be presented in succeeding paragraphs.

6.3.1. e) Principals' Views on Functions of PTC in Development of Education

It would be an exaggerated statement if I say that there existed a complete two way communication between a school and all parents in a community. However, better institutional performance had attracted many parents in most of the areas in district *Abbottabad*. Many arguments could be put by the administrators in reflecting the trust of the community upon schools like huge strength of students, financial and social support extended by parents, active and determined PTCs etc., still it was a big challenge for schools' administrators and members of the councils to increase the rate of parental involvement.

All of the principals acknowledged the importance of PTCs and its significant role in the development of education. However, these councils got an edge in improving the teaching-learning process more efficiently than taking all parents on board. The administrators told that the councils had been playing a vital role of a bridge between schools and communities. Courtesy efforts of the members, a sense of willing contribution in imparting better education was also emerging. Parents and community members had been taking active part on special occasions like election of PTCs, celebrating annual days, games competitions and prize distribution ceremonies. Principal of school No.1 told that on such occasions, mothers share their

experiences in their children's education which lead to better parenting. The principal further explained:

“I invite mother on every special occasion in school. It had proved a better platform for mothers to improve their parenting styles, home environments for better homework assignments. In the beginning, mothers were hesitant to attend school's programmes but we succeeded in making them feel at home”.

Consequently, these efforts lead to a consistent collaborating pattern between school and community.

When I asked principal of school No. 2 about the efforts made in winning confidence of the locality, he told that actually he had shifted the sense of responsibility to the parents/community. He meant that the parents were included in decision making process at each level and, hence they decided things for the betterment of their children's education. This was why many parents took active part on every occasion whenever the school's administration called them for.

In other words, it would be safe to assert that PTCs have been successful in forging a link between school and community. Some parents are ready to act as volunteers and take active part in decision-making process at school. Basically, participating in decision-making in its true sense resulted in endorsing Epstein's model of parental involvement in district *Abbottabad*. As discussed earlier, principals approved the role of PTC in adopting better parenting, improved homework strategies and emerging collaboration of community with school.

6.3.2. District Education Officer's (DEO) Views on School-Community Link

DEO in district *Shangla* was middle aged smart lady. She came from one of the localities in the district and had been serving on the post for the last 10 years. She showed enthusiasm in my study and explained the nature, structure and output of PTCs in detail.

According to the DEO, the councils had lessened her responsibilities in monitoring and taking on spot decisions. Many schools were far from the city and, hence, it was not possible for them to make scheduled monthly visit of each school. The PTCs in school performed the task of keeping vigilant eye on schools' activities. She told that male members were selected in girls' schools a decade ago and it was a better exercise than the current pattern of female members. She argued that women had not been empowered in KP to the extent where they could perform multiple tasks like men.

Inside schools, the role of PTCs was regarded much positive. In rare cases negative views were reported about the functioning of PTCs. The role of principals in taking parents on board in decision making process was appreciated by the officer. Especially the proper utilization of PTC funds in improving educational environment was highlighted. She also appreciated the principals' contribution in improving educational standard both quantitatively and qualitatively.

The officer shared the views of one of the principals who had stated that instead of inviting parents to schools, they should go to the community to get them on board. She told that poor parents expected less prospects of the exercise because of inferiority complex and financial frustration. She was confident about the better futuristic view of PTCs.

6.3.3. Teachers' Insight over School-Community Link

A teacher enjoys a key status in the whole realm of education system. He is directly involved with the students for longer time and with repeated frequency. It is generally observed that many teachers consider their duties as a burden in Pakistan, and the trend exacerbates more in the absence of strong leadership role of an

administrator. The phenomenon was practically observed in district *Abbottabad* where most of the principals had been successful in achieving institutional goals through their skills. The teachers reflected their efforts in supporting their heads of schools and working as a team.

The sampled teachers were happy with the intervention of community in the affairs of schools. They admitted the support of parents in educating their students in a proper way. Parents had started taking some interest in their children's education. A teacher of school No. 2 explained the situation as:

“two things are improved in many cases; students' attendance has been regulated and homework has been checked by parents daily. When a father/ guardian visit the school, we share our views with him how to adopt better strategy/schedule of study routine at home”.

Another teacher in school No. 1 told that I invited a mother to school to ask her why her daughter did not take interest in studies. When arrived unwillingly, she was nervous, wearing a shabby dress. After the meeting, she was very happy and started visiting confidently, taking active part in decision making process as well.

The teachers gave credit to PTC members in bringing parents to schools. Parents' relation with school got stronger and stronger with their each visit. Talking about the volunteerism, a teacher of school no.4 told that community members even performed their duties as a teacher in time of some emergency. These members taught to the students themselves when a teacher was unable to attend classes. The teachers welcomed the idea as a whole for positive contribution to the development process.

6.3.4. Parents' Perception about Parental Involvement and Functioning of PTCs

In district *Abbottabad*, parents/guardians of the students mostly belonged to working class. The multilingual nature of the communities has emerged because of migration from different parts of the country. The explicit stimulus operates in the form of pleasant weather and abundance of better educational institutions. Therefore, parents struggle hard to equip their children with best possible education. Fathers of the students were mostly less educated and the mothers were illiterate in most of the target area. They not only showed verbal approval of school-community link but also had started benefiting from it.

When we compare the outlook of community/parents in the district with other districts of KP, a significant difference could be observed in their attitude. Parents in district *Abbottabad* believe in meritocracy and fair play in examinations. They do not prefer short-cuts in achieving their goals. Similarly, they are more democratic and tolerate individual differences. This is mainly because they have not been under '*Khanism*'¹⁸. It is recorded earlier in this chapter where principals of schools highlighted the egalitarian attitude of communities because parents actively took part in electing members of PTCs. These elections take place in friendly environment with highest turnout. Similarly, district education officer ensures observance of annual days and awareness campaigns. All these factors contribute to overall view of responsibility in masses. However, its translations into strong bonds, between all parents and schools are still a far cry; although many parents have shown their commitment to communicate with their children's schools.

In individual interviews, parents positively voted in favour of parental involvement in their children's education at institutional level. Unlike the other two case studies,

¹⁸ *Khanism* is a Pashto word for feudal system in *pakhtun* culture.

they talked favourably of schools' staff for their hard work and stated that parents themselves are responsible for ignoring the requests of the schools' administrators. The obvious excuse presented in this context was timing conflict. At school's time, most of the parents/fathers pursued their office/job schedule. The illiterate mothers hesitated to confront educated and well-dressed teachers in their children's schools. I met with a mother in school No.1 who was illiterate, poorly dressed, yet she was confidently discussing her daughter's issue with the teachers. I asked her about the importance of mother's involvement in their children's education and in response she told:

“my family migrated to the city from rural area some 10 years ago. I admitted my children in schools and my two daughters consistently got failed in their annual examination. I decided to know the reasons and went their school. I was so confused and hesitant at my first entrance into the institution but the teachers warmly welcomed me. After discussing the issue with them, I concentrated upon their advice and I am happy my daughters took a new start and they passed with flying colours”.

When I probed, the mother explained that she focussed upon regulating the schedule of her children's homework. After few months she was able to differentiate between different subjects; she remembered the names of books and now she could read all the alphabets and digits from 1 to 100. The mother was then an active member of PTC, collaborating with the community.

The above mentioned case brings to light an important factor of mother's involvement in their children's schooling. As most of the mothers in poor communities have the status of a housewife; they can, perhaps, manage time to communicate with school and keep vigilant eye on the activities of children at home. Parallel to it, a sense of mutual empathy among mothers may add to adopt better parenting strategy.

In contrast, the sampled fathers/guardians advocated parental involvement and appreciated the government's policy of parent's involvement in decision making at institutional level in the shape of PTC; yet they did not show enthusiasm to adjust time in their schedule. Although some fathers who had been in contact with the school, talked about the better performance of their children in homework, co-curricular activities and, hence, better performance in their studies.

6.3.5. PTC Members' Views on Functioning of the Councils in the Development of Education

District *Abbottabad* is rightly called a 'model district' because of its role in imparting better education. Most of the families have migrated, as explained earlier, to the district with explicit aim of providing best possible education to their children. The fact has transformed the structure of the communities giving birth to the emergence of a new multilingual society. The new patterns of bridging links in a hybrid community have resulted in developing democratic outlook. The sense can be observed in formulation process of PTCs where proper electoral procedure is followed to elect chairman/members of the council. Although slight expression of dissatisfaction in favour of selection instead of election in school No. 3 was heard; yet most of the time schools and communities favoured proper democratic process.

Chairmen/members of the councils applauded the efforts of principals in attracting the whole community and electing representative leaders from different walks of life. People were informed through letters and even announcement of election schedule was also disseminated through loudspeakers in mosques. The winning contesters were told of their responsibilities on election's day. The representatives told that they had happily accepted the responsibilities as a challenge to promote the cause of providing improved teaching-learning environment for their children. They

also showed a determined support to the schools' administrators. Chairman of PTC in school No. 2 expressed his views in these words:

"I have told the principal of the school that my services are always at your disposal. Whenever he has asked; I offered complete support. Because I have studied in the school and now my children are studying here: if I do not coordinate with the school's staff then who will do it? I have a dream that integrity of the school and the mosque may remain intact. These two places/institutions reflect our public life".

The member belonged to middle class and ran a small business in the local market. In PTC meeting, when principal of the school narrated many episodes of social, economic and psychological support of PTC members; they just said that it was their duty and nothing else. The members said that the principal and his staff had been working hard to maximise educational facilities and provide healthy environment for their children. This was why they had been thankful to the principal. Talking about the importance of school-community link, the chairman told that neither schools could effectively work in isolation nor principals could communicate with parents through Bluetooth device. Therefore, a team of serious volunteers from the community was indispensable to crystalize the efforts of school's administrators.

Chairman and members of the council in school No. 4 narrated that they did not come to school to fulfil the official formality. Rather they had a vigilant eye on every aspect of the school and took active part in decision making process. Although they mentioned the importance of PTC funds and its proper utilization, yet they thought that finances was not a major problem because the community provided it whenever needed. They wished to explore the social issues in order to address the availability of quality education. The chairman was hopeful in luring in almost all the parents to school.

Almost all of the chairmen/members acknowledged the positive role of PTCs in promoting education and general welfare of the communities. The social networks

were considered as communal force consisting of volunteers to embark upon enterprises of mutual interest. They had shouldered the responsibility of guiding their new generation in a desirable direction.

6.3.6. Students' Perceptions about Parental Involvement

Students in the district showed gratitude towards their teachers, community members and parents. Consistent with the remarks of PTC members, the students reflected decent attitude and admitted the efforts of their parents and teachers in providing better education. I observed that there was less generation gap between parents and their children. Most of the time, interaction between them took place in pleasant mode, especially the children responded to the elders in decent/respectful manners. Principals and teachers too reported minimum occurrences of behaviour challenges in their students.

The students told that they were satisfied with the way they were taught in school. The teachers checked their homework regularly and posted comments for parents in their dairies/homework assignments. They never experienced vacant period and admired the struggles of their principals/teachers in making the environment of their schools pleasant and healthy. One of the student in school No. 2 told that whenever he found anything missing in functioning of the school, he conveyed his father and the later highlighted the issue with the principal.

Apart from teaching, the students were also jubilant over arrangement of sports galas by joint venture of community and school management. It was a routine feature that parents/community members awarded prizes in all competitions but the most amazing spectacle was a series of tournaments organised by the community members throughout the year. A student of class XI in school No. 4 told:

“PTC has contributed a lot in regulating our activities both inside and outside the school. Our classes are taken regularly and recently our school labs are equipped with all necessary instruments. Every student tries his best to excel in any field and grab the 1st prize. The community support serves as a catalyst in boasting our morale”.

The students knew about the cooperation extended by PTC members in preparing playground for volleyball and basketball in school No. 2. Similarly, the students of school No.1 thanked PTC members for installation of filter plant in their school. Earlier, they had to bring drinking water in bottles from homes. They also admired the friendly attitudes of their teachers.

6.4. Conclusion

District *Abbottabad* comprises of heterogeneous population scattered in low mountainous ranges. The healthy environment attracted people from all around and the local population accommodated immigrants that led to the emergence of multilingual society. The flexible nature of the communities had strong impact upon the patterns of communication. It was observed that the people preferred bridging links beyond his/her family and believed in achieved status through enhancing human skills i.e. getting better education.

The principals of schools had adopted democratic model of administration. They had been successful in achieving the desired goals with the help of their staff working as a team in friendly environment. They also coordinated with the communities through PTCs. In school No. 1, 2 and 4, members of the councils worked as partners with the school administration and it was found that the principals had been successful in creating a harmonious synergy with the communities. Many parents were included in volunteer lists of the school but the dream of involving all parents was still to be desired.

In a shell, the overall environment reflected the ideal in miniature. The willing contribution of parents in uplifting quality of schooling and the equally reciprocating attitude of the schools' management in accommodating parents, led to conducive environment that had lasting bearing on the grooming of students. We may say that PTCs positively collaborated in achieving better institutional performance of schools, taking parents on board to harness the effectiveness of Epstein's six types of parental involvement.

Chapter 7

Analysis

7.1. Introduction

In the preceding three chapters, I presented empirical data of all stakeholders ranging from need of school-community link to the role of parental involvement in the development of education. Each of the chapter was an individual unit with explicit aim in mind to dig out the social forces which were active to enhance the synergizing efforts of the state. In presenting data, efforts were made to introduce the reader(s) with each community by giving a panoramic picture of the locality/schools coupled with the description of respondents' social, economic and cultural backgrounds. However, this chapter juxtaposes the views of the respondents presented in the preceding three chapters along with field observations and secondary data for the purpose of deriving inferences. Thus, to ensure meaningful and understandable presentation, this chapter is comprised of three parts. Part I analyses the emerging patterns of parent-teacher council in three case studies. Part II evaluates the synergy view of social capital in the light of 1st part of the chapter while part III analyses and addresses the role of PTC in implementing Epstein's six types of parental involvement.

Part I

7.2. Functioning of PTCs

It was generally observed that government's mission in building the commitment towards promotion of education through PTCs, was confined, in most of the cases, to documentation. The implementers, mainly the concerned principals of the schools, were found uninterested in materializing the philosophy of PTCs. However, in all the three districts, performance of PTCs in district *Abbottabad* was comparatively better while in rest of the two districts (*Karak* and *Shangla*), the exercise was mostly restricted/ limited to mere utilization of PTC fund. The main difference was the overall openness in social and gender wise structure, improved economic conditions and multi-lingual set up of *Abbottabad* (see Ali, 2005).

Improved economic conditions render parents to think positively about their children's education. Middle class parents or, in other words, people with better economic conditions understand the importance of children's education (Mikiewicz *et. al.*, 2011) and communication with the children's school (Bauch, 1991). Consistent with Useem (1992) understanding that educational background affects the inclination of parents towards children's education, the trend of parents' interest in children schooling/education was observed in *Abbottabad*. However, it was also witnessed that an illiterate mother having working class background was not only an active member of PTC, but also learnt the basics of knowledge through regulating the homework of her kids. She stated in an individual interview that:

“I was an illiterate woman when we shifted to the city 10 years back, but now I can read English alphabets, digits from 1 to 100 and the names of books of my children. When my children do homework, I listen to them unconsciously and try to monitor their schedule”.

The case of this mother highlights the commitment of parents that contributes to the development of capacities/skills of the individuals. It is pertinent to note that such motivation (of the said mother) mainly happened due to the conducive and education-oriented people and culture. Putnam (1995) also believes the same and holds that:

“it is not law and formal institutions introduced by the state that decide how a country or region is structured and functions ..., the decisive role is played by differences in social activity traditions and self-organization of the communities constituting individual societies” (Putnam, 1995: 13 cited by Mikiewicz. P, 2011: 103).

This particular case reflects that PTCs in *Abbottabad* provided a congenial environment for working class parents to access Bourdieu’s cultural capital of middle class parents, as an alternative to closed community of Coleman.

The refined cultural capital of middle class parents in the district is due to comparatively changed approach of the inhabitants towards education. They supported private/public efforts to enhance human skills for the overall betterment of the community. As a result, these efforts were recognised by the directorate of education by declaring it a ‘model district’ in the province.

However, appreciation of the positive outcome by the state agency should not be taken for its commitment to the development of education. Many studies reveal that teachers and administrators cannot alone cater for all indicators necessary for better educational process (Bryk *et al.*, 1998; Coleman, 1998; Henry, 1996; Mortimore *et al.*, 1998; Rosenholtz, 1989; Sarason, 1995; Steinberg, 1996) and that they should be supplemented by the resources/ expertise of the community (Putnam, 2000). However, before turning towards community, it is necessary to understand the standing/determination of the state’s will in creating strong bonds between

institutions and communities. The circumstances revealed throughout the area and in district *Shangla* and *Karak* in particular, that principals were not serious in involving community as their partner. They considered community involvement through PTC as a formality. Most of the schools did not have a copy of PTC guide¹⁹. In many schools, inconsistency in members' signatures upon documents was observed that indicated its fake nature. Talking about the credibility of PTC, a father in district *Shangla* said:

“PTC is a bogus exercise altogether. Principals are least interested in parental involvement. The body of the council consists of few individuals, who may sign the official documents to fulfil the requirements of the forum. They have nothing to do with the performance of the school” (individual interview).

These findings are similar to the results presented in Common Wealth Education Fund (CEF) Report, (2004), which vividly declared the school management committees (SMCs) as formality even in cities like Karachi, Hyderabad, Peshawar, Multan. In this study, the vulnerability of the councils received a blow further at the hands of its own chairmen/ members. A chairman of PTC in district *Karak* criticised the organization as a strategy of the West to entangle principals in the quagmire of corruption. Members of the same council also supported the argument and told that principal of the school withdrew the funds with fake signatures and did not utilise a single penny in the school. A father in the community told that, in past, no PTC existed, yet the situation was not so bad in education because state actively participated in every minute management of institutions. Regardless of the state's efforts, the responsibility of providing education is lost somewhere between school and community instead of multiplied mutual efforts of the two.

¹⁹ PTC guide is an official document containing information about objectives and functioning of the councils.

Besides the above factors, the most interesting contrast between the theory and practice of the councils was observed in gender structure prevailed in the first two districts; whereas the third district (*Abbottabad*) exhibited some space provided to women in social life.

Parent-Teacher-Association (PTA) was introduced for the first time by mothers in US. It was 1897 when the movement was formally launched and mothers were invoked to register as members of PTA. After more than a hundred years, the same sense was designed to be induced among fathers through an imported policy of PTCs in Pakistan. Mothers were kept aside to participate in actual decision making process at institutional levels. In district *Shangla*, PTC of a girl's school was composed of male members because women were thought to be incapable of performing the task. In district *Karak*, the female members of the council were dependent upon their husbands/male members of their families. They could not move freely outside their homes; therefore, it was impossible for them to pursue any plan in public place. The situation explains a gap between the policy implemented and adoptability patterns of the local culture.

The mismatch between the policy and taboos of local culture clearly reveals the discrepancies in its adoptability patterns. It means that the policy of PTC is adopted and implemented by the government to receive funds from donor countries without thinking of its compatibility with the local culture. The policy enshrines holding elections among all parents in annual meeting for its chairman/members and teams are sent to school for monitoring the election process. However, most of the principals in district *Karak* and *Shangla* favoured selection method because of low attendance of parents - who mostly belonged to working class. A principal in district

Abbottabad suggested that instead of inviting parents to school, the principals should go first to the community to motivate parents and community. Another principal in the same district asked for proper audit of PTC fund in order to minimize the chance of fiscal embezzlement. A principal in district *Karak* was unhappy with political interference in schools and held that it carried negative impact on the overall activities of the institution. It means that the idea is unanimously and simultaneously incapable of producing optimum results throughout the changing patterns of local communities. Indigenous patterns are not inculcated accordingly and, hence, idea of PTCs failed, in most of the cases, in establishing a true synergy between school and community.

Part II

7.3. Theoretical Implications of Synergy View of Social Capital and PTCs

Synergy view of social capital amalgamates the micro component of network view and macro aspect of institutional view, enlarging the scope and practicability of social capital theory in the realm of development and policy (see chapter 2 for detail). Proponents of network theory, Ronald Burt (1992, 1997, 1998), Portes and Sensenbrenner (1993), Portes (1995, 1997, 1998), Massey and Espinosa (1997), Massey (1998), and Fafchamps and Minten (1999) recognize the importance of strong ‘intra’ community ties (bonding) coupled with weak ‘inter’ community networks (bridging) for the production of public goods. However, the capabilities of these groups largely depend upon the quality of formal institutions operating in the circumference of the community (North, 1990). Hence, institutional performance has profound effect upon individuals coupling and decoupling mechanism in social networks (see Granovetter, 1995 for further detail).

Deficient function of institutions is, in general, a dilemma in developing countries. In Pakistan too, the State’s will in implementing policy like PTC, looks marginal. Functioning of the councils, as explained above, is found restricted to mere lip service in most of the areas mainly due to low institutional performance. The bright prospects of PTCs in most areas of district *Abbottabad* and some areas of *Karak*, however, corresponds to the more ‘bridging’ networks in multilingual community-which are economically sound. Although the same culture of deficient institutions prevail here too, yet the democratic leadership of street level bureaucrats i.e. principals, succeeded in achieving institutional goals and objectives. The emergent heterogeneous relationships in the locality place the inhabitants in better position to access and embark upon productive enterprises. Considering purely economic

output, Briggs (1998) and Barr (1998) report the same results of grabbing more benefits by non-poor acting in ‘offensive’ manner.

Although Theda Skocpol (1995, 1996) and Judith Tendlers (1997) argue that communities only correspond to good governance and assumption of full responsibility for all aspects of modern life by the state. However, it was observed in district *Abbottabad* that PTC members and principal of school No. 2 jointly opposed the ill-will of the high-ups in sabotaging institutional integrity of the schools. As expatiated in chapter 6, the principal told that:

“the EDO replaced my Senior Science Teacher (SST) with a Senior English Teacher (SET) to give favour to the latter without considering its impact upon the capacities of my team. I consulted my PTC and decided to reject the move and, as a protest, I surrendered the duties of inapt substitute teacher to the EDO office”.

The principal further told that he experienced enormous pressure from the high-ups to capitulate but thanks to the community support that enabled him to withstand the decision. He further explained that members of the council arranged an SST on temporary basis so that the study of their children might not suffer. This case reflects the alternate response of educated community towards the indolence of institutions. Easterly (1999) along with Temple and Johnson (1998), Hall and Jones (1999) find that societies capable of producing and sustaining “middle class consensus” are more likely to create a positive growth rate. This finding suggests the shock absorber role of PTCs in avoiding conflict with powerful elites. Instead of forging complementarity with weak government, the society strengthens the capacities of street level bureaucrats for optimizing development process. This credit goes to the embeddedness of the principal in local culture (see Evans, 1992, 1995, 1996) because another principal of school No. 3 in the same district, who failed to enmesh

in the local community, could not respond in the same intensity to the arising problems.

In the absence of such bridging links in the community, the weak writ of the state is being hijacked by individuals and groups for their vested interests (Woolcock, 2000). Consistent with this idea, some cases emerged in district *Karak* and *Shangla* where principals were blamed for financial embezzlement in PTC funds by parents and PTC's cabinet. Such principals used their own social capital in the form of links with high-ups/political elites for their personal interest. This situation led to conflict between PTC and principal at school No. 3 in district *Karak*. In a group interview with PTC cabinet, the chairman of PTC even labelled the idea of the council with Western agenda of corrupting institutional heads of education department (see chapter 5 for detail), however, it is not the whole story reflecting the mind-set of the entire population in the district. Most of its inhabitants are well educated and exposed to the outer world. Coupling to bridging links outside the bonding relationships usually leads to decoupling local educational institutions. In other words, parents with diverse stock of social capital move to advanced cities of the country where they could provide better educational facilities to their children.

Such cases, although rare, were also prevalent in district *Shangla*. An EDO in this respect reported that:

“those individuals who have stakes in the society migrated to the cities and, here, we are grappling with the children of those who have no stakes in life at all”.

Here the EDO looks strong to justify inefficiency of government in harnessing the positive aspects of ‘bonding’ social capital of the poor communities. Although, it would not be so easy because it might entail altering social systems - which is the

outcome of cultural traditions observed for long time or vested interest of local elites (Klitgaard, 1990). It had never been the concern of political leaders in rural areas to take on board the whole community and link them to power structure. Even principals of schools looked hesitant to include PTC members in decision making process in district *Shangla*. Principal of school No.3 disclosed his fears in these words that:

“I requested the chairman/members of PTC to monitor our activities and give us feedback but I fear (with a smile on his face) they might start hijacking the educational process”.

The situation deteriorates further when the vested interests of the local leaders are supported by frustrating bureaucratic delays, rampant corruption in institutions, suppressed civil liberties and inaccessibility to civil rights. These factors hamper the process of development (World Bank, 1998) in general and development of education sector in particular. Collier (1998, 1999) and Temple (1998) also show that highly fragmented communities with weak political rights are destined to slow growth. Roderik (1998, 1999) also makes almost a similar argument by stating that societies with weak institutions passively react to emerging needs. But most importantly, Woolcock (2000) observes that synergy between community and institutions depends upon the internal coherence, credibility, competence and accountability of the institutions to the civil society.

Government schools in KP generally exhibits a sluggish response to the qualities listed above and it has a very negative impact upon the standard of education. Particularly, in rural areas like *Shangla*, schools are featured by insufficient teaching staff, autocratic style of administration and underestimating the community resources. Although the policy makers tried to make intact the credibility of PTCs

through third party validation; yet few principals yearned for proper audit system for the councils. Principal of school No. 3 in district *Karak* asked for diminishing political interference in schools and desired to make principals responsible to the community in true sense.

On the other hand, poor communities utilize their long experienced social networks such as ‘bonding in nature’ for the purpose of ensuring solidarity (see Kozel and Parker, 1998). Similarly, trust is one of the key elements of social capital and it depends much upon the level of prosperity. Hence, poor communities find it very difficult to participate in public goods contribution because they fear that they might lose their meagre resources in case of their failure (see Sztompka, 2010). These scarce resources in my case study of district *Shangla* refers to group’s membership and scant income from child labour. Probing the issue, I asked a father in school/community No. 4, who spoke against the corrupt culture, that why he hesitated to lodge a complaint against the principal, he replied:

“no one will listen to me because corrupt people have many links with the high-ups. Yes, it is for sure that I will confront many enemies in my own community if I speak against the popular illegal practices”.

Therefore, parents prefer to stay silent and ‘get-by’ with the existing resources. In a meeting with primary school teachers (PSTs), I asked one of them about the enrolled strength of his school and got astonished to hear that there were two lists of enrolled students. One list was original and the other was fake, designed for INGO that used to distribute cooking oil among newly enrolled students. The parents of such students could not afford to shift their children from job market to schools but aspired to retain benefits from INGO as well. In such circumstances, bridging links between school and community through PTC was a far cry. This situation is almost

similar to the meaning and philosophy of a *Pushto* proverb ‘Gul Khana za de pa gutta piyaaz utaram ao ta ye ukhrei’ (Gul Khan! (it is a name of the person concerned) I fasten a layer of onion on your septic finger for the purpose of cure but you do not leave it and eat altogether due to hunger.

Part III

7.4. Synergy of Community and School and Epstein's Model of Parental Involvement

The importance of parental involvement, as discussed earlier in this chapter, in children's education was established by all parents for improved teaching-learning process. In most of the rural areas PTCs were formed as mere formality. In practice, the principals managed the consultation process in their own interests (Levis and Naido, 2004). The principals were hesitant to include community members/parents in decision making process as Mc Ginn and Walsh (1999) observe that bureaucrats and professionals fear such steps which might lead to invade their professional spaces. However, in some areas of district *Karak* and most of the areas in district *Abbottabad*, the democratic leadership of principals crystalized their efforts in attracting community/parents towards schools in congruence with Epstein (1990) who argues that schools can encourage parental involvement by developing comprehensive programs across low income families.

In the present study where such efforts were made through PTCs in district *Karak* and more conspicuously in district *Abbottabad*, encouraging results were found. In the proceeding paragraphs, these outcomes are analysed in the light of Epstein's six types of parental involvement. The order of the six types is rearranged corresponding to the steps taken by school's administrators to involve community/parents.

7.4.1. Decision-Making

Democratic attitude of professionals provides congenial environment for optimizing civic engagement (Putnam, 2000). Many principals in these districts abstained from socially engineered functions of PTCs. They openly hailed the communities to sit

and decide the course of actions to be followed. Principals of schools No. 1 and 2 in district *Karak* told that they started English medium classes on the basis of decision taken by parents. Principal of school No.1 further told that the community had no high school for girls and parents proposed to start separate sections for girls. He further remarked that:

“it was a hard decision to accommodate separate sections of girls in a boys’ school because of gender segregation and a strict norm of ‘*Pardah*’²⁰ in *Pakhtun* culture; however, I did not wish to disappoint the community”.

Similarly, PTC in school No. 2 in district *Abbottabad* proposed to offer advanced subjects like computer science for students though its provision was not made in policy and no teachers were available to teach it. Yet the principal welcomed the idea and implemented it. These steps encouraged the communities/parents to coordinate with schools in providing congenial teaching-learning environment.

7.4.2. Communication

It is one of the prime objectives of PTC to grease the wheel of effective communication between school and community. Being a part of community, the council can work as a gateway to inclusiveness of all parents. Principals, especially in district *Abbottabad* and *Karak* too availed the services of chairmen/members of PTCs in consulting the parents for individual problems of students like long absenteeism, health/psychological and financial problems. Principal of school No. 4 in district *Abbottabad* highlighted the implicit communication with parents through PTCs as:

“first, I send message to concerned parents through the members of the council and if the problem persists, then the chairman goes to invite the parents to school in

²⁰ ‘*Pardah*’ is an Urdu word denoting a norm of local culture where women are supposed to cover the whole body while leaving the home.

order to discuss the situation with me and my staff. Most of the time, we have been successful in settling the conflicting situation”.

The chairman of the PTC also approved the impressive role of the councils in bringing community to the school. He told that most of the parents were hesitant in the start but the council compelled them to come to school for the betterment of their children’s education. The fact was evident from the high attendance of the parents in annual meeting. The cabinet of the council enthusiastically participated in awareness walks arranged regularly to display the importance of education. Parents also admitted the efforts made by the councils to educate them about the activities of schools.

7.4.3. Volunteerism

The chairmen/members of the PTC work as community volunteers. But the level of their dedication largely depends upon the attitude of the schools’ administrators. Generally the councils, as discussed in chapters 4 & 5, are entrusted with the duty of supervising and monitoring the development work in schools. It was generally observed that vigilant members of the councils had mainstreamed proper utilization of PTC funds in most of the schools in KP. EDOs and Director of Education appreciated it positively and decided to enlarge its scope by multiplying the amount of PTC funds from PKR .15 million to PKR .8 million.

However, in district *Abbottabad* the level of volunteerism transcended its role from mere supervising the developmental activities in a school. These councils not only offered their own services; they also got many parents on-board. Almost all principals appreciated the willingness of the councils to participate in any activity required.

7.4.4. Parenting

It is mostly concerned with mothers, because they have to look after/ manage children at homes. In *Pakhtun* cultures, the women are kept aside from public sphere, compromising the desired mother-school relationship. However, in district *Abbottabad*, the status of women exhibits some improvement because of comparatively high literacy rate among females (see table 3.1) and multilingual nature of the community. This was why parents shared their parenting experiences with one another in social gatherings in schools like annual days, quiz/sports competitions and annual meetings. Further, if parents were informed by the principals/teachers about attitude problems of their child; the parents contacted the school for mutual consultation. Principal of school No.2, as discussed in chapter 6, in district *Abbottabad* told:

“most of the time, parents overlook certain characteristics of a child that lead to serious problem. When we place such issue in front of father, he realizes it and starts keeping a vigilant eye on his son”.

Principals narrated many such incidents which were rectified by mutual consultation of parents and teachers. Although, the desired improvement in parenting through PTCs was still wanting, yet the stakeholders were satisfied with the ongoing achieved progress.

7.4.5. Learning at Home

Students' aptitudes are nourished at homes and it ultimately determines their outcomes in schools. Besides, scheduled programs of homework activities, children are minute observers of their surroundings. However, the application of Epstein's 'learning at home' was limited to home work even in those areas of my universe where synergy between school and community was intact to an encouraging

position. The exercise was limited to regulating the homework assignments of the students in district *Abbottabad*. It was observed that the agenda of PTC meetings included minutes that urged parents to help their children in accomplishing homework assignments. But no activities were listed in the record that were designed for the purpose. The enterprise was restricted to individual cases of certain parents who were invited by the teachers and general instructions delivered on annual parents day. However, the teachers appreciated the role of council in bringing parents to school.

7.4.6. Collaborating with the Community

Collaboration with the community reflected the determination of principals in forging links with the parents. In homogeneous society like district *Shangla*, parents helped schools in providing basic facilities like drinking water. In school/community No.1 in the district, a father had provided budget for the scheme of drinking water supply to the school. A father in district *Karak* had donated Rs. 50,000 for repairing the boundary walls of the school.

However, socio-economic conditions of the community played a high role in the provision of reciprocal resources. People in district *Abbottabad* were economically well off and hence they extended more such resources to public institutions. Drinking water and filtration plants were installed in school No. 1 and 2. PTC in school No. 1 contributed in levelling abandoned area of school for playground. Apart from physical and financial help, these members encouraged sports and co-curricular activities throughout the academic year. Their school had won many trophies in these activities, which were arranged/displayed in the office of the principal. It was one of the main reasons that parents were more involved in schools

of community No. 2. The results are consistent with the findings by Crosnoe (2001) who found that parents of students involved in sports were more likely to come to schools (see chapter 4,5 and 6 for further detail).

7.5. Conclusion

In this chapter, the main themes emerged from the data were analysed. It was ascertained that exercise of PTC was in practice notionally in most cases of the study because no heed was given to attune the idea for real benefits. Low socio-economic conditions and literacy rate rendered the community participation to mere fulfilling the formality in rural areas. The things were managed just to maintain getting funds from donors. Because the structure of the councils was deficient and manipulated contrary to its objectives of empowering communities through actively participating in decision making process. However, its worth as a tool for social capital building in the development of education was approved in some areas like district *Abbottabad*.

The study approves the role of synergy view of social capital in forging positive links between institutions and communities. Schools had been successful in winning the trust of parents in few areas of district *Karak* and most in *Abbottabad* through better institutional performance. Whereas in district *Shangla* and some areas of *Karak*, the parents and administrators were busy in blame game because of the absence of commitment and mutual trust.

In district *Abbottabad*, the encouraging position of schools in delivering its services displayed the broad scope of PTCs in empowering communities. The councils immanently helped schools' administrators in achieving better result of teaching-learning process. Furthermore, it also revealed the importance of synergy between

school and community as a tool in implementing Epstein's model of parental involvement.

Chapter 8

Conclusions

8.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, data presented in chapters 4, 5 and 6 was analysed in the light of existing theories. The discussion revolved around the process of social capital building through PTC in grabbing the outcome of Epstein model. The present chapter reiterates the main findings of the study; puts forwards recommendations for maximizing the outcomes of the policy; gives theoretical implications of the study and also delineates the limitations of the study.

8.2. Conclusions

The study, as discussed in chapter 1, is analytical in nature. It was designed to dig out the pros and cons of a novice move of social capital building towards the development of education through policy measure of formal organizations in the shape of parent-teacher-councils across the three different case studies (District *Shangla*, *Karak* and *Abbottabad*) in *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa*, Pakistan. Multiple case study design helped in understanding the phenomenon in wider context. Further, it ushered to highlight the impact of local factors on the emerging patterns of school-community links and hence, helped to predict similar and contrasting results.

Parent-teacher-Council is a useful intervention to build social capital level at community level and many studies suggests its positive outcomes associated with children's education in developed countries (see Fry, 1983; Epstein, 1987; and Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997). The need for such efforts intensifies in countries facing acute shortage of resources. However, limited implications of the policy were found in the study. In most of the areas the idea was found ineffective to exactly qualify its documented philosophy.

The lack of commitment on the part of government renders the policy to mere documentation like NGOs where more stress is observed primarily in keeping the records updated for maintaining the flow of aid from donors (see Ali, 2005). The principals of schools take the funds of the councils for granted without considering the idea as a vehicle for mobilizing the communities for the development of education.

The study exhibited that PTCs were regarded as a formality, restricting its scope to mere utilization PTC funds in most of the areas featured by bonding nature of social capital. Instead, its structure was deficient as envisaged in the policy. Many schools in district *Shangla* and *Karak* had chosen few local elites in the council only for the purpose of funds' withdrawal. The record revealed that the principal did not bother to include parents in the cabinet of the council. Among the long list of objectives, only financial aspects of PTC were highlighted by principals, EDOs and the Director of Education. The record further reflected inconsistencies in holding quarterly meetings and its agenda. Most of the principals were hesitant in exposing PTC record for the explicit reason of these incongruities.

Most of the time, PTC failed in building social capital across community because it had not been materialized properly. The idea is just borrowed with explicit aim of securing financial aid from the donors. Hence, more stress is laid upon fulfilling the minimal requirements of documentation with taking into consideration the local socio-cultural conditions and attitudes/aptitudes of stakeholders. It definitely leads to blame game between parents and schools' administrators.

Principals categorically complained about the irresponsible attitude of parents. They opined that fathers were less interested in their children's education; perhaps they

had overburden of large families to support. The EDO of district *Shangla* candidly declared that having a large family itself was a sign of irresponsibility on behalf of parents which was burden upon the fragile economy of the country.

In contrast, parents criticised schools' administrators for negligence in their duties. Many parents told that they were never contacted by the children's school. Some principals were even charged for making embezzlement in utilizing PTC funds through fake signatures of chairmen/members. Behind these conflicting situations, many factors operated.

On the top, lack of government interest was observed. It was translated on the ground characterised by vacant posts in schools and deficient professionalism in administrators. It resulted in lower institutional performance on one hand, and holding of community involvement as a threat by principals to their professional integrity on the other hand.

Many factors restricted its supposed aim of empowering communities to shoulder the responsibility of their children's education. Steady shift was observed with change in socio-cultural environment, nature of communal solidarity, literacy level, gender structure, institutional performance and democratic awareness. However, in the prevailing conditions PTCs have shown encouraging outcomes in some areas where institutional performance attracted local communities.

Most of the schools in district *Abbottabad* and few in district *Karak* reflected potential of the idea. In such areas, the council played a pivotal role in forging links between school and community. These networks were not only utilised by the principals for improving educational process; it worked as pressure groups, too,

supporting the administrators in subsidizing political interference in the institutions. In former case, chairmen/members of PTC concentrated upon providing basic facilities like provision of safe drinking water, playgrounds, participating in annual days' celebration, holding awareness walks/campaigns and taking on board the parents of those students who had been irregular or problematic. In the latter case, they empowered the principals through community support in taking decisions against the political will for vested interest.

Besides these achievements, the policy has to go miles for optimum gains. The above mentioned facts validate the positive outcomes of synergy view of social capital in the process of development in less developed countries. According to this perspective, if efficient public institutions are linked with community through public organizations, then it multiplies the outcomes manifold (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000). In this study, the PTCs displayed a sense of responsibility where the administrators provided congenial atmosphere for teaching-learning process. The synergy can, perhaps, exhibit more vitality if strengthened by specific course of action to be followed.

This study also substantiated the compatibility between synergy view of social capital and Epstein model. The degree of school-community links proportionately helped in achieving the six types of parental involvement. Reciprocally, the efficacy of the councils can be enhanced if the participation of the community/parents in schools' activities is framed on the basis of six types of Epstein model.

In the proceeding lines, some recommendations are put to optimize the degree of parental involvement through PTCs in the development of education.

8.3. Recommendations

In the light of the above findings, some suggestions are proposed for rectifying flaws found in the implementation's strategy of the policy to involve parents in children's education. Such interceptions are divided in many steps according to its importance and need.

- As established in chapter 2, principals of schools are the major stakeholder in synergy between school and community; therefore, it is important to sharpen their capabilities and induce democratic leadership in them. Because, most of the time in the field, I noted that administrators were either ignorant of the essence of PTCs or they exhibited irresponsible attitude towards poor and working class parents. Furthermore, signs of autocratic style of administration were also visible in their behaviours. Hence, it is important to arrange refresher courses for the principals in order to equip them with latest approaches of schools' administration. In this way they would be in better position to manage different programs for the maximum involvement of parents.

- Political leaders interfere in schools' affair for their vested interests which badly affects institutional performance and demoralise the ideal role of a teacher. Principal of school No. 2 in district *Karak*, openly declared politicians responsible for the degenerating standard of educational institutions. He suggested that schools should be made autonomous and only responsible to the community.

- The elites have no stake in government schools because their children study in private institutions. If the influentials are linked to these schools through BOG's consisting of local high profile personalities, then it would definitely improve its standard.
- Children of public office holders, teachers and high-ups of education department should be shifted to government schools. Because, most of them have abandoned the schools as their children are studying in expensive private schools of international standard. In this way, they will definitely work for the betterment of these institutions.
- The study illustrates a positive correlation between synergy view of social capital and Epstein's model of parental involvement. Hence, it is recommended that functioning of PTCs should be regulated by six types of the above mentioned model. It would help in crystalizing the idea on ground, instead of treating it as a formality.
- Media role in strengthening school-community link is not less important. Especially, electronic media can play pivotal role in creating soft image for general welfare of children in general and their education in particular. Similarly, it can also help in disseminating the message of producing fewer children for their better socialization.

8.4. Theoretical Implications of the Study

The concept of Parent-Teacher-Council is much lauded in the literature as a panacea to the evolving problems in delivering quality education (Op. Cited). This was the reason that it got status from informal to formal organization and hence, the

government of Pakistan incorporated it as an integral part of educational policy. It was intended to mobilize communities to assist the pledge of providing improved standard of education to all. It was further anticipated in theorizing the notion that bridging communities and public institutions would reciprocate the process of development.

However, the conclusions of the study revealed against the documented role of PTC in most of the areas. Its practicability was not feasible in changed environment with regard to culture, nature of relationships, socio-economic conditions, gender wise structure, trend of population growth, religious values, institutional performance, leadership style, political structure, government's determinism and attitude towards getting education.

Based on the findings of this study, I maintain that theoretical assumptions and policy expectations about community participation in schools are evident only notionally and have not been put into practice as anticipated, particularly in poor rural areas of district *Shangla* and *Karak*. I further argue that the councils primarily exhibit its formal nature, implicitly designed to fulfill the documentary requirements of the donors.

In theory, under establishment of Parent-Teachers-Councils, schools and communities are expected to share the responsibility of schooling. Although this idea was echoed by the administrators, PTC Chairmen/members and some parents in this study, yet it was observed that community's participation in school management often meant information sharing after decisions had been made or at best limited consultation, with the Principals acting as sole intermediary between school staff and chairmen/members of the councils.

Lewis & Naidoo (2004) validate such findings in their studies of school governance in South Africa, where respondents revealed that in practice, consultation processes in schools were invariably managed by principals in their own interests. Participation means the right of different groups to have a say in decision making process including the poor, less powerful and marginalized (Tikly, 2008). This was rarely observed in the above mentioned two districts and most of the time the councils had scant knowledge about their responsibilities. Instead of holding election, the cabinet of the councils was selected by the principals for their convenience. Hence, the PTC chairmen/members willy nilly advocated the interest of schools' administrators.

The interest of the principals was restricted to utilize the PTC fund either for personal benefits or benefits of the schools. We may say that the councils were regarded as a safeguard to the schools' administrators against the external interference of the community. This confirms the findings of McGinn & Welsh (1999) that professionals and bureaucrats always try to protect their professional spaces from any type of encroachment. A principal in district *Shangla* implicitly revealed his concerns about the negative use of power as being a chairman/member of PTC by meddling in the affairs of school.

Schools in district *Shangla* were featured by low institutional performance because of fewer teachers available; and in district *Karak*, the performance of schools was not better too mostly because of non-professional attitudes of teachers. Such conditions badly influenced the nature of social network between school and community. In contrast, improved service delivery by schools in district *Abbottabad* and in few areas of district *Karak* led to establish firm connections with parents in

general and PTC members in particular, through winning their trust. The results support the assumptions of synergy view of social capital by Woolcock and Narayan (2000).

Different studies exhibits that active parental involvement in the activities of the school positively influences children's schooling (Fry, 1983; Epstein, 1987; and Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997). This study also endorses the results, revealing the practicability of Epstein's model in programming the functions of Parent-teachers-Councils. Chapter No. 6 vividly illustrates the contributions of the councils in initiating the process of communication between school and community, invoking a spirit of volunteerism and collaboration in parents, providing grounds for improved style of parenting and supervision of their children's study schedule at home.

8.5. Limitations of the Study

Like other studies, this project too has certain limitations. First, there were certain external factors influencing the synergy between schools and communities like political interference in education department. During my data generation, I found that school administration could not follow rules and regulations because the local leaders always interfered in every step taken towards development of education but it was beyond the scope of the project to get on board the political leaders because of constraints of time and resources. Secondly, this study would have been more beneficial if conducted longitudinally extending up to a decade especially in gauging the six types of parental involvement propounded by Epstein model. Still the desired results can be obtained if repeated time to time. Lastly, the study would have been more rigorous if technically trained interviewers would have been available for generating data as the locale consisted of three districts.

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